

# *The Way of Deliverance*

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松井石根  
東條英機  
武蔵章

板垣征四郎  
廣田弘毅  
大村武吉郎

SIGNATURES WRITTEN JUST BEFORE THEIR DEATH BY THE  
CONDEMNED JAPANESE WAR PRISONERS

*Top group, From right to left—Doihara, Kenji; Matsui, Iwane; Tojo, Hideki; and Muto, Akira. Bottom group, From right to left—Itagaki, Seishiro; Hirota, Koki; and Kimura, Heitaro.*

# THE WAY OF DELIVERANCE

THREE YEARS WITH THE  
CONDEMNED JAPANESE  
WAR CRIMINALS

By

*Shinsho Hanayama*

BUDDHIST CHAPLAIN IN SUGAMO PRISON

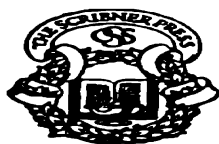
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## FOREWORD

The end of the Tokyo Trial marks an important dividing line in Japan's post-war history.

Three years have passed since I was first appointed Buddhist chaplain in Sugamo Prison. Looking back, I see now that my connection with Sugamo was the result of an unexpected coincidence. I had never dreamed that I would enter the war criminals' detention camp and come in daily contact with my condemned fellow-countrymen after the defeat and collapse of Japanese militarism.

But as it turned out, I was to have this experience, probably the most valuable of my whole life. For there, under the shadow of the gallows, not only was I to become the intimate "father confessor" of famous men whom I should not, in other circumstances, have been likely to meet, but also I was to witness the subtle, ennobling change wrought by religion in the human mind and heart when these are face to face with imminent and certain death.

From that time I have been longing to tell our people in some way, in any way, as a part of the record of this miserable war, what I heard and saw. The stories are too sincere and too poignant to remain my private property. And now that the Trial is over and the punishment suffered, fortunately I am able to realize my cherished wish: the "Asahi" has consented to publish my document.

Needless to say, as a student and priest of Japanese Buddhism, I have no political axe to grind. Indeed, I have always resented the unfair treatment our Government has accorded Buddhism since the Meiji Restoration, in 1868. Far be it from me to glorify the discredited apostles of militarism.

By training and natural inclination, I belong to the other side.

It is because I think it necessary, for the realization of true world peace as well as for the reconstruction of a peaceful Japan, to have our people read the records of such men, that I desire to publish the material which personal experience placed in my hands.

With some few exceptions these records show in the condemned men an ardent hope for peace, and indeed an awakening to religious ecstasy, rather than any complaints of injustice to themselves or any desire for revenge. From ex-generals and ex-ministers to humble ex-private soldiers, I found many startling examples of men who, having attained confident belief in a present and future spiritual life, had finally reached a state of beatitude utterly antipodal to that of war and conflict.

Finally, I realize that unless I give to the world these records no one else will or can, because no one else has been privileged to share my unique experience. As a priest I have tried to tell the truth and only the truth, without exaggeration of any kind, and to reproduce the dialogues held in the chapel, in the cells, and on the way to the place of execution in the plain words actually used at the time. And this same method I have employed in my auxiliary description. As for matters directly related to politics, I have avoided them as far as possible, for, as I say, that is not my field.

It was one day near the end of January, 1946, that I first heard from a friend the rumor that the American authorities at Sugamo Prison had requested the Japanese Government to find a Buddhist priest who could serve there as chaplain.

I remember the very bridge we were passing under in Shinjuku, when I said half-jokingly to that friend, "Let's both apply for the position!"

But of course, as so often happens in this life of ours, I had been preparing myself unconsciously, had been edging toward such a move, for a long time before that.

As it did to every Japanese, the Emperor's broadcast that August day announcing the surrender came to me as a great shock. There was first the unprecedented event of hearing the Imperial voice. But as His Majesty's meaning sunk in, I was astounded—the world as I had known it abruptly ended. I was too stunned, for the moment, even to feel relief that the horrible conflict was over at last.

Then I began thinking more calmly. I felt intuitively that now the militaristic forces which had been dominant in this country since the Meiji Era, and which had worshipped wealth and material power, were shattered by this single blow; and that now the time had come for men of letters to rise up and play their part, armed with a different sort of power. At the same time, I suffered from deep remorse at having remained a mere civilian in wartime. But above all else, the aroused feeling that I must set forth on a new life would not down; on the contrary, it grew, until I couldn't sleep at all that night.

The next morning I decided that the first thing I could do toward realizing my desire to be of service was to present in understandable form Prince Shotoku's \* "Commentary on the Shoma Sutra," to console and inspire a people whose hearts had been made desolate by a long war. The work would be congenial for another reason: Prince Shotoku's

\* Prince Shotoku (A.D. 572-621) was Regent of Japan in a troubled time somewhat comparable to the present.

book had been the subject of my Doctor's thesis. So I started my new life and my new work by getting up at five o'clock every morning.

I will not risk wearying the reader by going into details, but from that first day the problem absorbed most of my waking hours. I have given an account of my feelings at this time in my preface to the "Commentary on the Shoma Sutra" when it was published as a volume of the *Iwanami Library*.

How long we have been neglecting true religion! Certainly for eighty years, since the beginning of the Meiji Era. Who can say that the tendency to neglect religion and consequently to ignore the sacredness of the human individual has not brought on the doom we suffer today? I expressed this thought in my article, "The Constitution That Remains Unchanged Throughout the Ages," which appeared in the "Chugai Nippo" on the first three days.

And I realized that we Buddhists must reflect upon ourselves before criticizing others. Our own lack of spirituality and will-power was one of the principal causes of Japan's present fate.

As a priest and humble student of religion, I could not help feeling grave responsibility for having, myself, been carried away by the general trend. I could not suppress the passionate desire to make amends.

Moreover, a thing that impressed me much at the time was the fact that the American forces had been careful not to bomb such cities as Kyoto and Nara, which may be called the reservoirs of our Buddhist culture, though it would have been easy for the mighty B-29's to destroy them utterly.

In these cities there still remains the greatest spiritual heritage bequeathed us by our ancestors through a thousand

years and more. There, there are many grand temples; untouched, unspoiled. Within them many splendid Buddhist paintings sleep. They represent our very cultural essence; they are unique.

In the intention of the Allied forces to guard these treasures from destruction I felt I could detect a deeper and higher wish on their part to preserve and foster not only Japanese Buddhist arts but also world culture.

As a result of our defeat in the war, we have nothing today to be proud of. Nothing, except those hereditary treasures fortunately spared from Allied bombardment, and of these Buddhism is the source and embodied spirit. I wished then that I could spread it as a philosophy to Europe and America in some way or other. For that purpose it could be said that the Occupation gave us a rare chance.

Though in Europe, especially in Great Britain and France, an interest in Buddhism in general has existed for a hundred years, the study of the great Mahayanist Buddhism, which has developed conspicuously in Japan, has been initiated only lately and still is in an elementary stage. Its essence is not known to the world as yet. Foreigners' study of it still amounts to merely a cursory glance at its externals, as it were. This aspiration of mine to promote world knowledge of Buddhist culture must be mentioned as one of the forces impelling me toward Sugamo, though I did not know it at the time.

Strange to relate, a chance association with a certain foreign scholar in the last years of the War had enabled me to piece together my bawly broken English. This too was leading me unknowingly to Sugamo.

But a more serious matter influenced me. As their compatriot I could not be indifferent to the fact that those who

*had controlled and led Japan in the past were now going to stand trial, bitterly criticized by the nation. On this subject I wrote in the "Chugai Nippo":*

If our people scorn those who are about to appear in court as war criminals on account of the present difficulties of our life and, at the same time, continue their internal struggles merely in order to gain profit and false rights, they should be ashamed of themselves. On the other hand, those who have been arrested as the responsible persons should assert their opinions frankly before the Court and clear the road to true peace, if they conceive themselves to have been the leaders of Japan in the past.

If they feel responsibility for having led the human race into such a war and in having destroyed many innocent lives, even though they may believe in the lawfulness of their conduct as individuals, they should willingly sacrifice their lives and property in this limited world and join those in the infinite world.

Then future history will record the truth about these men, and they will be able to shine as lights that never will be extinguished.

My work of translating into modern Japanese the "Commentary on the Shoma Sutra" was completed much earlier than expected—after two and a half months of labor, day and night. On November 16th, I handed my manuscript to the Iwanami Publishing Company.

And now to return to that conversation with my friend as we passed under the Shinjuku bridge that day in January, '46. He merely laughed when I proposed that we both apply for the chaplain's position, and I laughed too; but when I



reached home I was serious. To make a story already too long less interminable, let me say that a few days later, accompanied by Mr. Saburo Ota of the Liaison Office, I was introduced to Major Doty of Sugamo Prison. Thus I appeared at the prison with my personal history typed in English and was given an appointment to see Colonel Hardy, the Commanding Officer, and Lieutenant Clemens, one of the chaplains, on February 14th. The interview was satisfactory, and I was told to start my service from the following week.

Thus I became, so to say, a voluntary prisoner of Sugamo for three years.

I learned later that the following circumstances had led to the appointment of a Buddhist chaplain.

Upon investigating the religious affiliations of the prisoners of the A, B and C Classes, the prison authorities discovered that 90 percent were Buddhists. Of course those who wrote "Buddhism" in the space reserved for "Religion" might not believe in Buddhism sincerely; undoubtedly in many cases they meant merely to give their family religion.

As for the few Christian war criminals, they presented no problem since the resident American chaplain could take care of them through a Nisei \* interpreter. But the authorities found they needed a Buddhist priest because they themselves knew nothing about Buddhism. They were "on the spot," as American slang has it, because they had allowed the prisoners to choose their faith in accordance with the principle of religious freedom.

An amusing sidelight on the whole affair was that the Japanese authorities were greatly embarrassed by the re-

\* See Glossary.

quest, since they had never before concerned themselves with religion. But in the deeper sense it was not amusing, I felt, since here was evident a defect in our national character and way of living.

A striking contrast was offered in a copy of the New Testament and Psalms which the Protestant chaplain, Capt. Bones, gave me. An American Flag was printed neatly inside the back cover, and on the first page was an inscription signed "Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 25 ." It was his message sent from the White House in Washington, and read as follows:

As Commander-in-Chief I take pleasure in commending the reading of the Bible to all who serve in the armed forces of the United States. Throughout the centuries men of many faiths and diverse origins have found in the sacred Book words of wisdom, counsel and inspiration. It is a fountain of strength and now, as always, an aid in attaining the highest aspirations of the human soul.

At that time, in Europe, Germany had already started the war. The United States was already vigorously aiding Great Britain and France. The act of the President in officially making this recommendation to think on spiritual things filled me with admiration. And knowing that all Americans serving in the Pacific went to the front with this Bible in their pockets, I felt as though cold perspiration were running down my spine. For how many of *our* supreme commanders had taught their subordinates the importance of having religious faith? In this point alone it can be said that we were beaten before we started. And I thought to myself then how strange a fate that now I should be called upon

to preach the truth and the need for faith to these very leaders.

In completing this work I owe much to the generous co-operation of Messrs. Masao Nomura and Fumio Kobayashi, both of the Social Department of the "Asahi," and I beg them to accept my warmest thanks.

**SHINSHO HANAYAMA**



## PROLOGUE

### THE GATE OF SUGAMO

#### *I Hold My First Services for the Prisoners*

Guided by an American M.P., I passed through the entrance hall and mounted to the chaplains' office on the second floor. There, Lieutenant Scott, a chaplain attached to the prison, had been waiting for me. After giving me a pleasant greeting he led me into the adjoining hall, which, since they had taken over Sugamo, the Americans had been using as a Christian chapel. It was a big room, over forty feet long and more than thirty-five feet wide. The Buddhist altar which I had brought to the gate with the help of American G.I.'s the week before was standing in its proper place in front.

It was February 28th,

As I was wearing a morning-coat with a stiff collar, I put the Buddhist gown on over it and hung the ceremonial beads around my neck. Then I decorated the altar with the beautiful white and yellow chrysanthemums and narcissus which the American authorities had sent from Tsukiji, and lit the U.S.-made white candles. Then I burned some fragrant incense sent by the Chief Priest of the Honganji sect of Kyoto. And then I waited.

At one o'clock the prisoners of Cell Block 1-A, who I learned later were living lonely days confined in single cells, entered and took seats by sevens on the double lines of benches. Soon there were the faces of more than sixty men sitting side by side, eyes gleaming. The men wore various kinds of clothes, and no one was handcuffed. The six doors were locked tight. Outside the windows, only the tops of the Himalayan cedars were visible.

Now I was seated on the chair in front of the altar, facing it. With my eyes closed and hands clasped softly, I bowed down three times, recalling my debt to my parents, Buddha, and the Emperor. Then, ringing the little bell, I read the *Shoshinge*—a gospel by Shinran—and finished the reciting of six short prayers. This lasted about twenty-five minutes. Then I stood up, and turning around took my place in front of the pulpit. Though I glanced over the faces to see if there might not be an acquaintance among them, I found no one I knew. They all looked alike.

The sermon took forty minutes, but they listened earnestly. Then they went out in good order through a narrow door at the rear—looking as if they had gained something.

I was left alone with the empty rows of benches. When I attempted to return to the adjoining room, I found the door was locked. I was in an awkward position. I wanted a drink of water. I could neither go to the toilet nor smoke. Indeed, I had never had such an awkward experience. I was a prisoner in Sugamo!

Rapping on the various doors brought no one. There was nothing I could do about it. I had to wait for about thirty minutes watching the Himalayan cedars and the rows of prison windows opposite the chapel.

At two-thirty, the men from Cell Block 2-A came in. Sixty

of them; interned in thirteen multiple cells. Near the chapel windows at the side there stood five or six M.P.'s and Nisei G.I.'s on guard. This time Chaplain Scott and Major Swanson came in to watch proceedings. When the service of about one hour had ended like the previous one, the Major unlocked the door and sent the prisoners out.

"I am afraid you must be tired," he said to me in English.

"Well, I was greatly inconvenienced because I could not smoke or even have a drink of water," I answered frankly; upon which the major showed his sympathy by giving me a pleasant smile.

"Can't you make your sermon shorter?" Lieutenant Scott asked.

"I'm sorry, but I can't," I answered.

Then both officers praised me, saying that they were quite satisfied with my Buddhist service. When I left the room, Lieutenant Scott condescended to hold my hat and help me on with my overcoat, and sent me off kindly.

In comparison with the strained feeling of the morning, my returning steps after the unloading of my heavy burden were light.

### *MARCH 2ND*

On this day I discovered that the altar had been placed inside the alcove and a curtain hung in front of it as I had previously suggested. And before the curtain, the Christian altar now stood. But they consented to remove this altar to the corridor during my service. I was deeply impressed by the generous attitude of the authorities, even though the arrangement may have been chiefly for their own convenience.

I helped Lieutenant Scott, the Catholic chaplain, and

Captain Bones, the Protestant, shift the altar on which the Cross and the Holy Picture of Christ was placed, to the corridor. Then arranging the ornaments on my own altar, lighting the candles and burning the incense as before, I waited for the arrival of the prisoners. This time there were thirty men from the multiple cells of Cell Block 2-A. Then sixty prisoners from the single cells of Cell Block 3-A. I held service and preached for about one hour to each group as I had done before.

Captain Bones thanked me for the Buddhist Bible I had sent him and said it would be a great help to him. That day, things went better during the interval between the services and I was given some oranges and apples to eat.

### MARCH 7TH

Sixty-five men from the single cells of Block 1-B. There were many young men among them, and I was reminded of my classroom in the University. I was disappointed to note that none of them bowed toward the altar on returning to their cells, but I felt somewhat relieved when I found some of them reciting the prayers after the reading of the *Shoshinge*.

When I began my next sermon, I was deeply moved to find Mr. Kunihiro Okura in the front row and Mr. Matsutaro Shoriki in the last row, among the forty prisoners from the multiple cells of Block 2-B. Mr. Okura, as president of the Okura Spiritual Culture Institute, had taught some of my friends. Furthermore, after he became president of Toyo University, I as one of the professors there came to know him well and had many chances of listening to his inspiring talks to the students. But now the situation was exactly reversed.



With my mind on the strain in the presence of my master, I preached for his sake, and I think that, for me, my sermon was full of strength.

After the service I descended from the pulpit and approached him.

"It's too bad—" I said.

Rising from the bench he answered with a smile. "Thank you. Please give my greetings to all and tell them I am in good health."

Mr. Shoriki, former president of the "Yomiuri Newspaper," I had met two or three times at banquets given by the Chief Priest, whose advisors in various matters we had both been. He was still as vigorous as ever. I spoke to him too.

There were some prisoners in this group nearly seventy years old, and many of them bowed low toward the altar. I wished from the depth of my soul that the Buddhist Scriptures and beads would arrive soon.

### *MARCH 9TH*

For the first time, today I had a chance to really converse with a condemned prisoner. As I was waiting in the chapel, Major Doty and Lieutenant Scott entered with a youthful Japanese soldier. He was ex-Captain Isao Fukuhara, former commandant of Omuta Prisoners' Camp. Leaving an M.P. on guard, the two American officers went out; and after having him pray before Buddha for a time, I began to talk with him.

Worried over his poor father parents, his brother, sisters, and wife with young children whom he had left in his home town of Masuda, Mino Gun, Kumamoto Prefecture, he asked

me to deliver to them these words: "Don't make any complaint, and build up the family again."

While preaching to forty prisoners from the multiple cells of 2-A, I noticed among them Mr. Kaya, ex-Minister of Finance. I knew him because he had been one of the advisors to the Honganji sect.

Some of the prisoners prayed with folded hands wrapped in long strings of beads. After the sermon one of them asked me a question: "It seems that Christianity explains all the incidents in a human life as being the results of an already determined fate. How does Buddhism explain the matter?"

I told him that what happened to us was the natural consequence of our own deeds.

### *MARCH 14TH*

I saw both ex-Lieutenant Kei Yuri, former commandant of Omuta POW Camp, of Dazaifu, Chikushi Gun, Fukuoka Prefecture, and ex-Captain Kaichi Hirate, former commandant of Muroran POW Camp, of Kitami, Hokkaido. These two are the first ones sentenced here to die on the gallows. From one P.M. I preached to about fifty prisoners from single cells of Block 1-C. As has happened before, their attitude shown in leaving the chapel was utterly different from that when entering. I was glad to observe that the inward impression felt by them was manifested in outward form in spite of themselves.

From two-thirty, I held service for thirty-five prisoners from Cell One to 13 of the multiple cells of Block 2-G. Among them I noticed Prince Nashimoto, ex-Premier Hirota, ex-General Araki, and ex-General Masaki.

Prince Nashimoto sat by the window in the second row.

Around him were many young civilian prisoners. Despite the Imperial presence, I spoke as usual. "You, Ministers of State and soldiers, who have guided Japan heretofore—" I could not utter the word "Prince," as I was choked with emotion.

This day in my sermon I reminded my hearers that the *Hokkegisō* by Prince Shotoku (A.D. 572-621) is a property of the Emperor; that the time when Prince Shotoku reigned as Regent was a critical period for Japan as Emperor Sushun was assassinated and the Japanese commission to Korea was abolished; that Prince Shotoku taught that all the people should respect highly the law, prudence, and eternal peace; that he inspired the marvelous culture of the Asuka Age; that though his family was exterminated, the foundations of the country were strengthened so that finally the Taika Reformation was accomplished; that after sending Inoko Ono to China and transplanting thence the essence of Chinese culture he wrote the *Commentary on the Three Holy Scriptures*, the first book ever published in Japan; that it was he who taught the meaning of the three phases of Buddha which exist concurrently, and explained that "So" (oneself) means accord with "Ho" (or Law), that is, one should be in harmony with the truth of the universe.

My congregation listened earnestly and when the sermon ended, ex-General Masaki, sitting in the last row, stepped forward and greeted me with the polite "Please continue your favors toward me." I was especially pleased as the General had once attended a lecture of mine at the Isogami Hall in Shiba Ward and afterward we had ridden together in the same car as far as Shibuya. General Araki also came forward and offered me a courteous greeting.

The audience being such a distinguished one, I had never spoken under so much strain as on that day. Yet, though I was tired, I was satisfied. Captain Bones sent me to the station by jeep.

### MARCH 16TH

As I was arranging the Buddhist ornaments in front of the altar, Colonel Hardy, the commanding officer, came into the room leading another colonel whom I had not seen before.

"How are you, Mr. Hanayama?"

He greeted me first. Then the colonel introduced by him reached up to shake hands with me standing in the pulpit. I stretched out my hand from the higher place to the high-ranking officer standing several inches lower, as I could not do otherwise. I felt embarrassed, but couldn't help my rudeness because matters had moved so quickly.

For about twenty minutes I talked with a young condemned prisoner by the name of Katsumori Tamura. Next I interviewed, or tried to interview, a Korean of Chinese descent named Chozen Wan. This young man knew neither English nor Japanese, nor even much Korean. The only Chinese characters he could read were elementary ones such as "flower" or "Buddha." I was utterly at a loss how to talk with him. After considering this and that to no avail, I finally led him to the altar and gave him three incense-sticks to burn and offer. Then he bowed down three times and prayed quietly, clasping his hands.

On that day, ex-General Tojo appeared in chapel for the first time. He sat on the extreme left of the front bench on the right side. He was wearing a military uniform without

shoulder-tabs. The men seated near him appeared to be young privates. His famous spectacles glittered. I also recognized Mr. Yoshihisa Kuzuu, the former secretary-general of the Black Dragon Society.

In my sermon I described at length the situation which existed in Japan when Prince Shotoku was ruling. I reminded my hearers that the 2nd Article of the Prince's Constitution of Seventeen Articles had been the subject of Dr. Ui's lecture before the Emperor this year; that this 2nd Article was neglected during the recent war; that the truth that "prosperity does not last" was taught in Shotoku's song, "Iroha," which our ancestors liked so much; that the same truth is still valid today; and that, though a Constitution may be revised or become obsolete altogether, those Seventeen Articles, in which the Prince taught the possibility of the realization of peace and wisdom on the earth through adoption of the principle of universal spiritual Law, should be our unchanging Constitution forever. I also referred to Prince Shotoku's Commentary on the Gospel of Buddha, which is a treasured possession of the Imperial Household.

Ex-General Tojo continued to listen most earnestly till the last word without moving a muscle. I prayed in my heart that some day this, his first attendance, would bear fruit.

### *MARCH 30TH*

Cell Block 2-B. I failed to find the face of ex-Finance Minister Kaya in his usual group today. Before the prisoners came in I scattered Buddhist rosaries here and there on the benches. When I counted them later, four were gone. I did the same before the next service for Cell Block 3-B, and

\* A powerful reactionary terrorist organization.

noticed that some of the men sought seats where the beads were. I was pleased to note that the men showed a growing familiarity with the use of these aids to prayer.

#### APRIL 4TH

In a newspaper the other day appeared an article allegedly by me on present conditions in Sugamo. The headline ran: "Big Shots in Depressed State: Tojo as Fat as Ever." I apologized to the prisoners for the unauthorized report, as newspapers were permitted them then and they might have read the article.

General Masaki was absent today. But Prince Nashimoto and General Araki were present. I also recognized the figure of ex-Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka far to the rear. He looked rather depressed and may already have been ill. There were some other elderly generals in the audience, though I did not know then that they were ex-Generals Doihara and Koiso and ex-Marshal Hata.

I noticed especially a young man, seated next to Prince Nashimoto, reading the *Shoshinge*—which, as I've said before, is the gospel according to Shinran. General Araki retired from the room with a low bow. The Prince also showed his respect for the altar by bending his old body. I was all the more impressed because His Imperial Highness had once served in a Shinto \* shrine.

#### APRIL 6TH

Probably because of interrogation, ex-General-Premier Tojo did not appear today. But Mr. Bannan Ida, who did not attend last time, was there. After the sermon he stepped

\* See Glossary.

forward from his seat in the second row and greeted me, saying he was sorry not to have been present the other day but that he had been ill. I recalled that during the war I had made a speech at Asakusa Temple for the priests of the Tendai sect together with Mr. Ida.

### *Increasing Spirituality of Prisoners*

At first, the prisoners attended chapel in any old costume—some even in nightclothes. Some clattered in making a great commotion with their clogs. Others came as if to a show. But gradually, as the services were repeated, an earnest feeling seemed to spread and deepen; almost all the men took part with growing reverence and sincerity.

I remember late June of the first year, when the mercury registered over 90 degrees in Tokyo and little fresh air could circulate in the room, which had windows on only one side. Old generals, having no summer suit, wore winter uniforms or ancient morning-coats in heat as humid as the steamroom of a bath. Probably in their cells they had been lying about practically in the nude. Yet they listened to the hour-long service and sermon solemnly and earnestly without moving. The beads of sweat were streaming down their faces, but they neither used their fans nor wiped away the sweat with their handkerchiefs. Such trifles as heat and discomfort did not matter for them confronting the greatest problem of life—death. I was so deeply impressed by their sincerity that I continued my sermon forgetting to wipe the sweat off my own face. And I made the following resolution. Life in the university has summer, winter, and spring vacations. It also has Sundays off, and holidays. But there is no such leisure

in the imminent presence of death. I should be ashamed if I took a rest from a service that for the hearers came only once a month. So I told myself that for this reason I would never take a day off from Sugamo but on the contrary would exert my utmost effort to preach the way of the Sacred Law to these unhappy persons.

As matters turned out I held services even on the last day of December and on the second day of January; I preached there even on Empire Day and on the Emperor's Birthday, on which the entire nation is supposed to rest. While at Sugamo I carried out my resolve not to take any of the usual University vacations. And especially I did all that I could to help the condemned persons go to the gallows in spiritual peace. I held services on two days every week—i.e., four times a week—and held personal interviews with from four to ten condemned prisoners a week. I also did what I could to console those prisoners who were suffering from various kinds of mental disorder. Even so, from the individual prisoner's point of view this meant only one sermon a month, and as the number of those under death-sentence increased as time went on, the personal interview came round only after three or four or even six months. I induced them to read religious books, during their long empty hours, which they did, most of them, with evident enjoyment. As time went on, I noticed that every group grew adept at reciting the *Shoshinge* in unison as I read it slowly. They would recite standing, just before the sermon:

“Though the good life is very difficult to lead,  
Now I keep it;  
Though the sacred law of Buddha is very difficult to hear,  
Now I can hear it.”



They read this raising their voices together from the depth of their hearts.

"I voluntarily believe in Buddha;  
May I understand the great Truth together with other men,  
And develop the will to attain the higher state of mind!"

Reflecting that until recently these had been the men who forced the nation to recite together on every possible occasion, "The Morale of the Battlefield" and "The Oath of the People," a flood of emotions filled my mind.

I had supposed, when I entered the gate of Sugamo, that I should hold services for a few people for a few months; but, contrary to my expectation, I was there for three years, preaching sometimes to from seven or eight hundred to more than a thousand prisoners.

During those years, some of the prisoners attempted suicide, and some, as I have said, fell into mental disorders. In all such cases, when interviewing them individually, I tried to make them realize that life is priceless and that the most important thing in life is to live in religious belief. Though I have many memories concerning at least six such cases, ranging from that of an Army elementary school teacher to that of a former chief of nurses of the Kyushu Imperial University Hospital, I will not discuss them here. I also was asked to interview ex-Lieutenant-General Kenryo Sato, of the group of major war criminals, for the same purpose.

I paid a visit to ex-Premier Tojo, ex-Privy Councillor Hiranuma, and Mr. Shumei Okawa when they were in the prison hospital. And I also visited ex-Assistant Professor Mori of Kyushu University, when he was ill there.

Since the executions by hanging began, I have seen off twenty-seven men of the B and the C classes of war criminals, and more recently seven men of the major class. My reminiscences of them will be given in detail later. But I cannot help mentioning here one episode which I shall never forget. It concerned the death of an ex-Navy petty officer named Matsujiro Nakasai who had been sentenced to twenty years. An urgent telegram had been sent his family, notifying them that he was critically ill. But by the time his father and younger brother reached Tokyo, he was already dead of tuberculosis—at thirty-four.

“If you attempt to carry the body back to Takaya, Gifu, I doubt if you can do anything about burial in the midst of this heavy snow,” I told them. “Wouldn’t it be better to ask the authorities here to cremate it?”

“Then, please clip his hair and nails for us,” they requested.

So after reading the Holy Scripture before the body lying in the refrigerated room of the hospital, I did as I had been asked.

But they beseeched me further. “Please, the toe-nails too.”

So I clipped the nails of the ten toes of both feet. Lifting his feet colder than ice, I clipped the nails for the dead man’s family. I still remember the physical shock of touching those cold feet in that frigid room. But this experience too brought me new religious gratefulness.

When I passed through Matsue City last summer—I was on my way home from visiting the family of ex-Captain Isao Fukuhara, who had died calmly on the gallows two years before—Major Lansberry, M.P., the adjutant of Shimane Military Government, welcomed me. In the course of our

conversation he turned to Mr. Nonomura, head priest of that area, who was accompanying me, and remarked:

“I was in Sugamo Prison from its opening, and was much embarrassed because so many of the prisoners attempted suicide. But since Dr. Hanayama’s coming there have been no more such cases. We are very grateful for Dr. Hanayama’s efforts.”

This was news to me, but needless to say it pleased me very much. Later, Captain Scott—he was promoted before returning to the States—praised me to the newspaper reporters, in recognition of my humble efforts.

Toward the end, after an execution by hanging or shooting, the officials concerned got into the habit of gathering for a few minutes at the Officers’ Club. There, the Commanding Officer of Sugamo, the Eighth Army executioner, and other officers used to ask me to shake hands and thank me for my efforts. The reason, of course, was that the condemned had died calmly without making any trouble.

I should like not to keep it as my own joy but to share with all of you the fact that our fellow-countrymen left behind noble impressions by the manner in which they encountered death.

## CHAPTER I

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### THE BUDDHIST SERVICES BECOME A PRISON FIXTURE

#### *How I Obtained an Altar*

**WHEN** it was decided that I should hold services at Sugamo, permission was given me to procure a Buddhist altar and other necessary articles. I investigated and found that such things had already been used in the hall when under Japanese management, but that for some reason they had been removed when the Americans took over the storehouse of the Tokyo Detention Jail at Toyotama.

So on February 19, together with some American soldiers, the chaplain's Nisei assistant, whose name was Tagami, and two Japanese employees, I went to get them. Having disassembled the statue and the big altar and loaded them on our truck, we returned to Sugamo about three o'clock in the afternoon. I was alarmed at the rate that truck ran on the narrow road between Shinjuku and Ikebukuro. But when it came to the bad gravel road near the prison it slowed down and by the time we had reached the gate by a circuitous route it was going more slowly and carefully than most men walk. I verily believe it took more time to cover that short bad stretch than it did the rest of the trip.

I could not help feeling grateful for the delicate handling

of the altar, by one young American G.I. in particular, and looked into his face with admiration, though it was a sulky one in outward appearance. Perhaps that soldier knew for what purpose those Buddhist ornaments were to be used.

The unloading of course drew a curious crowd, the members of which made various comments.

"Maybe someone is going to be executed."

"Somebody has died, perhaps."

"No, that's a portable shrine."

Such whispers reached my ears and made me sad, for they illustrated the common people's lack of sincere interest in religion. Occurring immediately after the American G.I., who must be a Christian—that is, a heretic to us—had shown such unusual care for the altar, despite his probable knowledge that he was carrying it for the benefit of war criminals, the incident made me feel all the more miserable.

The hall as I have said, was on the second floor. Chaplain Scott was astonished to find the altar much bigger than he had expected. We were making so much noise lugging it upstairs that even Colonel Hardy came out.

"It won't be so big when it is reassembled," I said, trying to soothe them.

But another thing embarrassed me. A Cross and a Holy Christian Statue for the use of the American soldiers stood where originally the Buddhist altar had been.

"As the altar was on this spot before, I wonder if the Cross couldn't be moved somewhere else," I asked.

My request was denied and I didn't blame them. But when I entered the room for my next service, I was surprised to find that the Cross had been shifted during my absence.

This sort of thing is always difficult for believers in different religions. It must have been especially so for the

Americans, under the existing circumstances. Yet they consented willingly. I, of a different faith, could not help feeling grateful for their generosity.

### MARCH 12TH

I went to Toyotama again, this time to get a Buddhist sanctuary. As the truck for the altar had been too small, today the authorities gave me a very large one. But this time, as the sanctuary turned out to be very small, they were again surprised and shouted "Chr—!" when I returned to Sugamo with it. [The Japanese original does not specify whether the American chaplains joined in this exclamation.—Translators.]

This sanctuary was later placed in the room nearest the place of execution. It was set up there to help the condemned attain spiritual peace before starting on their journey to the next world. Group after group chanted the name of Buddha and shouted "Banzai" in front of it before crossing the open court to the foot of the gallows.

But that day I put the sanctuary in a little room next the chapel and prayed quietly before it a while with my hands clasped. When I had finished, the chaplain suddenly asked me the size of a Japanese coffin. He also questioned me concerning the material we usually lined it with. He told me that in the Western world coffins are sometimes made of copper or teak, and that as the bodies are carefully embalmed they are not cremated.

I explained that our coffins are six feet long, three feet wide, and two feet deep, and that the lining varied with the dead person's rank. I also explained the Japanese customs concerning cremation and interment.

"Cremation in Japan was instituted after Buddhism was

introduced. The first cases known are those of the Emperors Monmu and Jito, their bodies having been cremated in obedience to their wills. Cremation derived from the Buddhist doctrine that our bodies are the mere tabernacle of the soul, and that after the soul's departure they return at last to mud, water, and air. So burning the body is not deemed cruel."

The chaplain nodded understandingly.

The first man to die during my time at Sugamo was Kei Yuri, who was executed at dawn of April 26th in the same place used for that purpose by the former Tokyo Prison. I was not asked to help with his preparation. So far as I know, the coffins were good ones made of *sen* planks eight inches wide. The bodies were treated carefully, and I noticed in the case of Yuri that it was decently covered with white cotton cloth from head to foot. I used to read Sutras in front of these bodies.

### *Flowers and Candles*

As the war criminals grew more earnest in their attitude toward religion, I wished all the more keenly to comfort their senses of sight, hearing, and smell, at least while in the chapel. So I endeavored to procure flowers, candles, and incense at any cost. Through them I hoped to instil some life and brightness in the hearts of those who because of long isolation from outside society were freezing up inside.

But in the burnt-out Tokyo of that time it was difficult to buy a small bunch of flowers for even fifty yen. People were too busy scratching for food to have the leisure to cultivate and appreciate flowers.

It was on March 9th that Chaplain Scott came to me with an embarrassed look.

"Doctor Hanayama, do you really need flowers? In the Christian service, we can get along without them."

This was because I had asked for them before.

"Though I cannot get them," I replied, "I presume that the U. S. Army can."

"O.K. You win," he said, smiling.

But he made it clear that even for the Army they were very hard to procure. So he asked again, "You really need them?"

"I need them at any cost. They are necessary from the religious standpoint. They are not a luxury like flowers to put on a family table."

"Is that so?" He was absorbed in thought.

Later, Captain Bones, the Protestant chaplain, came in and spoke to me:

"Do you really need flowers?"

"Yes, I need them by all means."

"Why? Will you explain the reason for me?"

Then, as I recall, there took place the following dialogue:

"A candle is, as it were, the light of life. In Buddhism it symbolizes the wisdom of Buddha."

"I see. And incense?"

"Incense cleanses away the sins of a human being. It symbolizes purity."

"And flowers?"

I looked at him and sighed.

"O.K. I understand. I will do my best to get them somehow or other."

As a result of this conversation, the flowers of each season—such as the narcissus and the yellow chrysanthemum—decorated Buddha's altar and helped to console the numbed





senses of my condemned criminals with a flicker of warmth from the outside world.

Generosity and sympathy—I think I need not mention them again. I would like to say here merely that by such trivial good wishes the souls of those full of agony were comforted and strengthened with a religious power.

### *The Prisoners' Deepening Reverence*

As I have said, it was my custom to sit on a chair in front of the altar and first chant the *Shoshinge* and *Wasan* \* reverently, and then, stepping to the pulpit, preach. At first various suggestions were made by the prisoners, among them one that I should omit the reading of the Holy Scripture and make the sermon longer. But I explained to them the history of my *Shoshinge*, that my mother had given it to me, and continued:

“It is because I want to calm my heart by hearing the voice of my dead mother in each syllable and imagining her wishes that I chant this Scripture. On this blessed and sublime occasion I endeavor to improve myself into a state of true thankfulness to Buddha. And hoping at the same time that all of you will be able to enter the same state of reverence as was enjoyed by your parents and grandparents when you were children, and so on back to your remote ancestors, I am always praying and reading the Scripture.”

Gradually those who could comprehend my intention increased in number, and more and more of the prisoners joined me loudly in chanting the *Shoshinge*.

This was true not only of the younger men of the B and C classes but also of the ex-generals and ex-statesmen. Sur-

\* See Glossary.

rounded by such voices and such figures, I became more and more impressed with the irony of the situation: those who had been the proud rulers of the land were now mere common men imprisoned. And though they had sat in the seats of the mighty for many years, this was probably the first time they had read the *Shoshinge* with sincerity and knowledge.

As I have said, in my first sermon I introduced myself as a student of the works of Prince Shotoku; but later my themes were quite diversified—too numerous to quote in a book of this nature. Here I shall merely say that most of my inspirations seemed to have reached the hearts of my hearers, for their fruit was returned to me later in various forms of deep spiritual intercourse.

For example, let me quote part of the letter which ex-Colonel Mannosuke Sasaki, commanding officer of a unit engaged in the construction of the Tai-Burmese Railway, wrote me the night before his departure for punishment at Singapore:

Looking back now, it seems as though the past thirty-five years have been only a dream. The letters of commendation I received from our Government for my achievements in the war have now changed into the sentence handed down by the International Court. But I resign myself to fate as I cannot shun it anyway. I am praying that I may live out my few remaining years following the teaching of the limitless mercy of Buddha, and in the end leave this world to start on a new long journey. The only thing that weighs on my mind is that I am leaving the fatherland at such a time when it has not even started reconstruction. But I can do nothing against that fate either. Now, when it is too late, it occurs to me often that if religion and philosophy or literature and the arts, which express truth, goodness, and beauty, had per-

meated our people, especially military circles, the present catastrophe might have been avoided. Long ago, during my two years' service in Siberia, I realized this keenly. But I felt I could do nothing about it, and now my criticism has degenerated to a mere grumble.

Last night my father, who died twenty years ago, stood by my bed in the figure of the Biroshana Buddha. I thought then what a strange dream I had been dreaming. This evening I received the order of departure.

Feeling that my father was still watching over and protecting me, I could not stop the tears streaming from my eyes. This also is an example of the limitless mercy of Buddha. I felt deeply grateful and could not help bowing my head in reverence. As the time is slipping away second by second, I will now stop this letter.

May you ever be healthy and happy.

With gratitude to Buddha—

Respectfully,

Mannosuke Sasaki (Colonel)

To the Reverend Doctor.

So the old colonel left Sugamo passing the same judgment as mine against recent Japan and her army, although he had been a soldier. As we had seen each other only during the service his face is not clear in my memory; but I was pleased to know that though my sermons were so humble they had started a friendship which would last forever. So far as I know this was the last letter ever written by the old colonel. I have full confidence in the depth of his religious faith, and am sure that he left this world in peace of mind and with a heart filled with ecstasy. Among the prisoners there were not a few who had until then never come in contact with Buddha, the Sutras, and other holy things. However, they gradually began to understand the significance of

religion and to reflect upon their past. And they began to live a wonderful new life, such as can scarcely be imagined by us, through pity for unbelievers, and through the consciousness that life has no meaning without religion and obedience to the Holy Scriptures.

I often laid out strings of prayer-beads sent by the Honganji Temple of Kyoto, not only on the benches but also upon the desk at the entrance to the room. At first I noticed that most of the prisoners avoided them as if they were something ominous. But gradually these beads became indispensable to most of the men. And finally, some of the condemned prisoners left their beads with their other keepsakes, saying, "Will you please hand these to my wife after I die."

This was true not only of the young soldiers but also of such personages as Tojo, Doihara, Muto, Itagaki, and Matsui, as I shall show later. And there also were benevolent people outside the prison. In response to my article in the "Chugai Nippo" asking for the donation of religious books to war criminals, I once received fifteen strings of splendid beads from a manufacturer in Kyoto. Attached to them was a letter:

Instead of speaking to you directly, I send my humble products for the use of the war criminals, if there are any who want to have them. To wit:

Beads made of polished plum seeds.....5 strings  
Beads made by linking pine seeds.....5 strings  
Beads made of knots of bamboo.....5 strings

The Chinese characters of the writing looked as though they had been brushed by a faithful old man. The gentle good wishes brimmed over the short sentences gracefully.

## CHAPTER II

### BEFORE THE EXECUTIONS BEGAN

#### *The Two Years of the Tokyo Trial*

**THE** International Military Tribunal held its first session on May 3,

As I have said, the twenty-eight accused were already interned in Sugamo at the time of my first visit, and since then had been attending my sermons in the prison chapel.

Though always watching the course of the trial and the movements of the defendants, for the most part I made only indirect approaches to the latter during the trial, such as sending them religious books or calling on the sick ones; for I thought it better for them to concentrate upon affairs in court.

Here I should like to quote from an article of mine entitled "How to Follow the Tokyo Trial," which appeared in *World Buddhism*:

It seems as though most of our people, having forgotten their sentiments at the time of Pearl Harbor, look upon the trial as none of their concern. But if they would reflect upon their past cooperation with the war effort, even if there might be some difference in their roles or even if they fol-

lowed the crowd unwillingly, they should realize that in truth these prisoners are being tried instead of all of us. Therefore, should we not reflect deeply upon the right or wrong of our own past acts? The defense being offered by these prisoners is merely an argument to prove their legal innocence against the incriminating argument of the prosecution. For that purpose the American defense counsel are cooperating with the Japanese lawyers. Isn't it our duty to listen to the trial with full consciousness of the fact that the prisoners are not claiming innocence or non-responsibility for their acts against the nation, but that they are merely defending themselves against the prosecution's contention that they are legally guilty? Deep soul-searching is required of us as their compatriots.

The foregoing was exactly my view of the Tokyo Trial and my attitude toward the defendants—now reduced to twenty-five because of the illness of Messrs. Okawa, Matsuoka, and Nagano.

As I have said, I had few direct contacts with the prisoners during the two and a half years of the Trial. But here are some items from my diary, which I have somewhat grandly called "Records of Sugamo."

*APRIL 13TH,*

Major Swanson, officer in charge of prisoners, came in and looking at me suspiciously remarked, "I wonder how General Tojo got a string of praying-beads."

Showing him mine, I asked, "The same as these?"

"Yes," he answered.

"Well," I said. "I don't know how he got them. Though I have preached to his group three times, he attended only

the first time. And I don't think there were any beads in the chapel then."

He looked puzzled as if wondering how Tojo had got them. I thought that probably it wasn't so much the beads themselves that worried the Major as the string, which might be employed as a means of self-destruction. At any rate, I hadn't the slightest idea how Tojo had managed to possess himself of them.

#### APRIL 27TH, SATURDAY

I spoke to about thirty prisoners from one to three o'clock in the afternoon. Among them I noticed the faces of Araki, Ida, and Kuzuu. As they left, Mr. Araki said that he would like to have my address sometime. I told him to write in care of the Literature Department of Tokyo University. As he wanted to read some commentary on the *Hannya Sutra*, I handed him "A Lecture on the Urabo Sutra," "Prison and Life," and "Thanks to My Life in Prison I Found Religion."

#### MAY 2ND, THE DAY BEFORE THE TRIAL OPENED

As a number of older prisoners were present at the afternoon service, among them Mr. Koki Hirota, I addressed my sermon especially to them. I explained the proper way to chant the Holy Scriptures before the altar, and the fundamental principles of the various sects of religion. To tell the truth, being a mere scholar, I knew no more about politicians and soldiers than the common people do. The only ones I could recognize with certainty were Tojo, Araki, Hirota, Kaya, Hiranuma, Matsuoka, Masaki, Okura, Shoriki, Ida, Iwamura, and Kuzuu.

That day, some of these older men asked for permission to take copies of the *Shoshinge* to their cells. I told them

that I was sorry but that these copies had to remain in the chapel. I promised, however, to send them other copies as soon as I could. As a stop-gap I handed them copies of "The Road of Truth" and "Life and Religion" by Shinryu Ume-hara.

Before leaving the chapel, Mr. Hirota stepped forward in front of the altar, and clasping his hands together made three low bows. As I had read the news of his wife's death, I felt intuitively that he was probably praying for her eternal welfare.

#### *MAY 25TH, SATURDAY*

Perhaps because of a recess of the Court, Hirota, Hiranuma, and others came to service today. The benches on both sides were almost full. In the first row on the left side, Mr. Hiranuma was sitting in a jacket with a closed collar. I noticed Hirota in the center of the right group. Tojo was not there—probably because of being interrogated by the prosecution. Hiranuma was meditating with his eyes shut. Just as previously, at the close Hirota stepped forward to the altar and bowed down with clasped hands and then greeted me, before he went out.

Today, the books I handed out were "Domei Shoshin" by Tetsujo Tsumoto, "A Lecture on Hannyashinkyo," "From Marx to Buddha," "Notes of a Convert," and "Buddhist Culture," in the last of which was an article of mine. As for the "Domei Shoshin," ex-General Heitaro Kimura, who was sentenced to death later, asked me if possible to hand this book over to his children, together with a note saying that it was much better than the "last words" he was leaving them.

The trial entered its important stage, and those who were accused went to Ichigaya by bus every day except Saturday



and Sunday. They had been in multiple cells before the Trial, but after its opening they were transferred to the single cells on the second floor of Block 5.

Thinking, as I've already said, that they should be concentrating their chief attention on their defense, I tried to look after their spiritual welfare quietly without intruding upon them too much.

*OCTOBER 10TH*

I sent to ex-General Iwane Matsui a one-volume Buddhist Bible and the "Kyogaku Shinbun" (a newspaper interested in subjects dealing with science and religion), which was published by Mr. Riri Nakayma, an old acquaintance of both of us. As I handed these to Chaplain Ryan, I have no doubt that he delivered them on his visit to the single cells.

*NOVEMBER 7TH*

Accompanying Father Ryan, I paid a visit to the hospital at Ryogoku to inquire after ex-Premier Hiranuma. I cannot remember what we talked about, but I do recall that there was an untouched dish of foreign-style food beside his bed. It was a nice room.

*DECEMBER 8TH*

Though it was Sunday, I went to Sugamo and had a special interview with Mr. Kenryo Sato. The authorities had some misgivings as to his mental condition and wanted me to look into it.

He was plump and sounded sane enough while we were talking. I could detect no sign of mental disorder. When I informed him that ex-General Nakamura had been re-

leased, he appeared surprised. We talked of a young officer who had recently been executed, and of the pre-Meiji patriot, Yoshida Shoin; and then he talked about himself.

"For a long time I carried around a vial of potassium cyanide with me so that I could commit suicide any time I wanted to. But after my arrest as a war criminal suspect I changed my mind, thinking that it would still not be too late to kill myself after I had stood my trial like a man. So I stopped carrying it. Now I am happy to have attained a religious mind, however slight, as a result of not committing suicide."

I told him about ex-Captain Hirate, a condemned prisoner.

Then he spoke, filled with emotion. "Compared with my past, when I was occupied day and night with my military duties, my present is happy, since now I have enough time to reflect upon religion. As I'm busy studying the documents related to the Trial just now, I have only one religious book at hand, but I am reading the Kanwan Sutra and Shin Sutra. I read Shinran's "Tannisho," \* in college. But I really wish I had some more fundamental books on Buddhism."

So I promised to send him a copy of "A Lecture on Tannisho," and handed him several volumes, such as "Japanese Views of Death and Life," "The Shinshu \* Reader," and "The Road."

According to what he told me, the A Class suspects are permitted to talk to each other and to take exercise. They have grown accustomed to their single cells, but are bored on Saturdays and Sundays for lack of books to read. Otherwise they seem contented enough—that is, of course, allowing for the circumstances. Even such a man as Mr. Kido,

\* See Glossary.

[Marquis Kido, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal] who was living in a big mansion, appears to be quite at home in his small cell of three straw mats (nine feet by six), saying, "Now, if you would make this room one mat wider and put in a closet, it would be quite cozy and convenient. I have told my wife that if she ever builds a house she had better make such a room." Also, Mr. Sato told me that the A Class prisoners joke among themselves. "It's lucky for us that in the days of our power we built such a gorgeous prison as this!"

As Mr. Sato was born in Kanazawa City, which is also my native place, I was all the more pleased to have this chance of meeting him.

#### DECEMBER 17TH

Mr. Sato returned the "Japanese Views of Death and Life" and made a special request for "The Buddhist Book of the Jodo Shin Sect." I have sent him "Buddha," by Taiei Kaneko. I am told that all the books I gave or sent to Mr. Sato have been passed around and read by all the defendants of the A Class.

Father Ryan came in with the writings of several of the accused and asked me to translate them.

Mr. Tojo:

"Even if the eternal truth shines on my face, I do not shrink."

Mr. Shushin Nagano:

"With a single body I fought over three thousand *ri*;

With one sword I was confronted with millions of forces."

[A *ri* is about two and a half miles.]

Mr. Hirota (two sentences):

"Everything falls into the place where it belongs."

"The bright moon appears when the time comes,  
And the cool breeze begins to blow naturally then."

Mr. Itagaki to Benevolent Brother Sato:

"The truly respectable and benevolent men do not seek for life nor spoil their own virtue, but they kill themselves so as to complete their virtue."

MARCH 8,

*I Visit Tojo at the U. S. Army Hospital*

Shortly after one P.M., accompanied by Father Ryan and a guard with a rifle, I paid a call on ex-Premier Tojo in the U. S. Army Hospital at Ryogoku. This was the first time I had met him personally, although he had attended my service. It didn't seem to me that his cold was a bad one. He was sound asleep as we entered the large room, but upon our gentle intruding he woke at once. He appeared to remember me though he had seen me only once, and remarked, "I belong to the same sect as yours. The Jodo Sect."

"Isn't it the Jodo Shu Branch?" I asked.

"Yes, that's right." Then he added with deep feeling, "As a matter of fact, my mother was the daughter of a priest of Ogura." Then he went on, "Religious books are the best of all books." Then as if suddenly aware of the Bible lying by his side: "The chaplain brought this Bible the other day, and I'm reading it now. All religions are the same, aren't they?"

"Yes; 'though there may be various ways to reach the mountaintop, the peak is only one,' after all," I answered, and took out of my pocket a volume of "Reihai Seiten" (a Buddhist Bible arranged to be read at services), which he took in his hands gladly and said, "Thank you very much."

Then I told him that I had visited Mr. Hiranuma when he was ill in this very room, and that I had talked with Mr. Sato twice already. To this he said, "He also comes of a priestly family."

The impression I received of the man Tojo during this conversation was not that of the haughty personage I had heard of or read about in the newspapers. He was like an utterly plain and elderly "Grandpa."

"Take good care of yourself," I said to him as I went out.

Then, after passing through other rooms, I visited the isolation yard behind a screen and a locked door in the basement. In it at the time were a former major of Military Police by the name of Ken Tohei who had attempted to commit suicide, a man named Sakae, and the defendant Shumei Okawa. [This is the man who slapped Tojo on the head in court during the Trial and was declared insane by the doctors. Since then he has translated the Koran from the original Arabic into Japanese. He says Mohammed appears to him in visions. He is still considered insane.]

Mr. Okawa was sitting in his nightgown.

"Do you recognize me, Mr. Okawa?" I asked.

"You are Mr. Hanayama, aren't you? You were wearing Buddhist robes the last time I saw you."

"How is your illness?"

"Thank you. I am quite recovered. I shall return to Sugamo within a couple of days," he answered lightheartedly.

Then I thought of something.

"You are a pupil of the great Master, Anezaki, aren't you?" I inquired.

"Yes, I am."

"And also of the great Master, Takakusu, aren't you? If so, you and I are fellow-pupils; for I too am a follower of both Anezaki and Takakusu."

"Yes, yes,"—eagerly.

And a few minutes later I left him. His mind seemed to be functioning all right. The only sign of mental upset I could discern was a certain lightness or levity in his manner of speech.

Thus the Tokyo Trial approached its end, and its final hearing was finished on April 16,

Hoping to have the defendants attain a firm religious consciousness by the time the historic verdict was announced, I continued sending these men books to strengthen their faith.

On April 24th, I sent sixteen copies of *Bukkyo Yoten* (a condensed Bible of Buddhism) to Araki, Doihara, Hata, Hiranuma, Hirota, Itagaki, Kaya, Kido, Koiso, Minami, Sato, Shigemitsu, Shimada, Suzuki, Tojo, and Umezu.

Besides the above, I sent a volume of "Shoshinge Kosan" (Lectures on and Praise of the *Shoshinge*) to Tojo specially.

On June 5th, I presented copies of "The Religious Faith Appearing in the Songs of the Successive Emperors" (by Mizumaro Ishida) to the four major defendants whom I knew: namely, Tojo, Hiranuma, Hirota, and Araki. I sent them this book because experience with other seekers had proved that it was very effective in bringing people to religion.

On July 3rd, I sent copies of *Bukkyo Yoten* to the remaining eight men, and also distributed fourteen other volumes

which I thought suited to the tastes of their respective recipients.\*

Permission to send these books was granted through the kindness of the prison authorities.

But there is one more thing which I must record here as a sacred duty. It is the fact that many of these religious books and magazines were sent from a distance by religious organizations and benevolent persons all over the country, who, hearing that I was serving in Sugamo as the Japanese chaplain, donated them to help me in my unusual task of preaching to the war criminals.

I cannot but feel the deepest gratitude to those merciful hearts, near and far, known and unknown, who helped us then. But for their warm cooperation, how much greater would have been my difficulties. Almost one hundred persons throughout the country sent me Buddhist and Christian books. And I distributed these among a thousand and several hundred prisoners of all three Classes.

I am thankful to these sympathizers, and at the same time feel a fresh warmth in the realization that the beautiful tradition of generosity has not vanished from our land.

\* Appendix III.

## CHAPTER III

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### THE RECORDS OF TWENTY-SEVEN CONDEMNED PRISONERS \*

#### 1.

#### *Death in Peacetime is Difficult*

AS A result of my entering the gate of Sugamo, I was privileged to come in close contact with twenty-seven young men who were now destined to die.

What they one and all told me was this: "I thought it nothing to die in battle, but now—" Among them were volunteer members of death bands, and men who had often crossed the death line through showers of bullets. They all declared that their state of mind then, when they were willing to sacrifice body and soul in the rush to victory, was totally different from what it was now, when, accused of responsibility for the past, they had to wait in peacetime for the slow, remorseless approach of death.

This sentiment shows the vast difference between men's souls in the mad excitement of war and the same souls in the

\* For data on these men see Appendix I.



quietness of peace. And it also shows that men never want to die as long as they are in ordinary circumstances.

Men love life and abhor death to the last. Then what will be the state of their mind when they are driven into that absolute corner from which they know they cannot escape death? How do they feel when they are waiting for its inevitable approach, some months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, seconds hence?

According to my records and memory, the number of men I have walked with to the edge of the grave is thirty-four, including Tojo and the six other condemned of Class A. Here, in this chapter, I shall describe the personal status and last hours of the twenty-seven younger men mentioned above, in order of the dates of their execution.

## 2.

### *The Last of Young Kei*

On the night before the morning on which he was to die, I visited ex-1st Lieutenant Kei Yuri—the first condemned prisoner to be executed in Japan—in his cell in Block 5 C.

Having been suddenly ordered to remain overnight in the prison, I left the chaplain's office at dusk about seven-thirty in the evening, led by Lieutenant Scott and another officer. We had to pass through many gates strictly guarded by M.P.'s before entering through a corridor into Block 5 C, where only condemned prisoners were confined. This was one of the uniform three-storied concrete buildings which lie deep within Sugamo Prison.

Lining the narrow corridor on both sides stretched a

double row of cells barred with doors of solid iron with peepholes so small that as we passed we couldn't see inside. We climbed to the third floor, both the officers who were in the lead and the M.P.'s who followed me treading softly.

We passed along the fronts of the cells on this level until we reached the innermost one, and there the guiding Lieutenant stopped. Before a cell differing from the others in having a door of coarse wire mesh instead of the usual iron, an M.P. was sitting on guard in a chair, and inside, Yuri could be seen lying under a heap of bed comforters.

I entered alone, the door closing and locking behind me with a clang. The officers went downstairs. Yuri did not try to get up, but he wasn't asleep. Didn't he have the strength to get up, or wasn't he fully roused from last night's nightmare?

"Yuri! It's I, Hanayama," I called to him.

At last, he uncovered his head and looked at me. As he recognized who it was he sat up squarely. Folding up the blanket which had covered his head he offered it to me as a cushion.

I looked around, trying to take in the cell—the first single cell I had been in.

There were two new straw mats, with a wooden strip of floor three feet by six on which stood a toilet and built-in basin that could also be used as a bench and desk. The whole room was six by nine, and as Yuri's belongings were in the next cell there was nothing but the bedding in this one.

"About seven o'clock last night, the announcement of execution was delivered to me," he said in a low tone. His calmness showed that he had been prepared for it. I nodded.

"I have written my mother three times within the past few days but have received no answer yet." He seemed very

anxious. Yuri had no immediate family except his sixty-six-year-old mother left alone at Dazaifu, Fukuoka. Naturally, to him she was the dearest being in the world.

"Sir, I would like to see my mother once more."

"Of course you would. But it's impossible. Even I, ordered to remain here, cannot return home. I cannot go outside nor send a telegram. Even if I could, it would be too late. For your mother must come up from Kyushu." He looked terribly lonesome.

"I will tell her anything you want," I went on. "Do tell me."

"Thank you very much. Then have the kindness to tell her one thing. After I die, ask her to take my bones and bury them at the shrine of Dazaifu. For I had no time to visit there on my way here."

"Very well. Anything else?"

"Secondly, I have been unable to worship the Sun for a long time since I was transferred to this solitary cell."

"That's a pity!"

"So after I die please let my bones worship the Sun."

My eyes filled with hot tears.

"Thirdly, tell her to live long for my sake—one hundred or even two hundred years!"

He mentioned two or three other wishes. Then he said, smiling, "Since last night it has been raining steadily. It was raining hard when I was given the sentence. It must be God's way of blessing me. Even God is weeping in my behalf."

He took out something wrapped in white paper from the side pocket of his coat. It was two small photographs. He laid them out carefully to show me. One was the faded picture of a woman with a baby in her arms—I knew instinctively that

the woman was Yuri's mother. The other was a present-day snapshot of a younger woman.

"Who's she?" I asked, for I had never heard that he had a wife.

Then he told me that he had a fiancée and showed me a few letters from her. He said she was twenty-five years old and was confidently awaiting his return to his native place. When he was summoned to Tokyo as a war criminal suspect, he promised her faithfully that he would come back and build with her a happy life. Stopping overnight at Atami on his way up, he wrote in his diary his dream for their future.

"You see, she may commit suicide. So please tell her to marry some other man and that I will watch over and protect her and him forever. Sir, I beseech you to tell her this yourself. . . . These are my souvenirs," he added more cheerfully, handing me a charm and two hundred verses of his own composition, together with the two photographs.

"To my regret I could not wash my loincloths in the next cell," he said sadly.

The interview lasted about half an hour. Then, feeling that Yuri was tired and had nothing further to say for the moment, I signalled the M. P. on guard, went downstairs, and walked back to the chaplains' office with Lieutenant Scott.

There, I lay down on a cot, but could not sleep at all that night.

"Doctor Hanayama, will you come now?"

At last a guard had come for me. It was a little before five in the morning and still dark. I visited Yuri's single cell again, this time taking some writing paper, a pencil, and also a canteen. Five or six M.P.'s accompanied me.

I found him sitting bolt upright in the middle of the cell.

"Here's pencil and paper if you have anything to write."

But he sat there silent with his eyes shut for about half an hour. Then he arose and accepting my offer went to the desk.

Time passed.

"Three minutes more," announced the officer through the wire-mesh door.

Yuri folded and handed the paper to me, went to the toilet and urinated, and blew his nose.

We descended in formal order to the groundfloor. Bright electric lights flooded the entire courtyard. The rain, which had continued for the past thirty-six hours, still fell softly. We trudged through the drizzle for three or four minutes toward the place of execution. Yuri was wearing a military uniform and was not handcuffed. Walking at his side, I spoke to him, trying to be casual.

"By the way, Yuri-san, what college did you graduate from?"

"I did not go to college."

"Then your high school?"

"Nagasaki."

"Haven't you any relatives?"

"Yes, a few distant ones in Tokyo."

Soon, very soon, we were at the entrance to the building housing the gallows. In a room adjoining them was the Buddhist altar I have mentioned. The soldiers and M.P.'s remained courteously outside; only Lieutenant Scott went in with us.

Giving Yuri three sticks of incense I said, "Two for your father and mother, and one for yourself."

Nodding silently he offered them to the altar one by one.

After reading the Holy Scripture, we sang the "Kimi-

gayo" \* (the National Anthem) together, and then "Umi-yukaba" (If you go to sea).

When the singing was over I took a cup, filled it with water from my canteen, and placed it before the altar. Then taking a sip from it I handed it to Yuri as the symbol of our final parting. I offered him some American-made biscuits and asked him to drink a little more.

Up to this moment he had shown little emotion, but now he suddenly leaned tight against the altar and clasping both hands fairly shouted, "I won't die, I won't die! I will become a Buddha, I will become a Buddha!" And he wept bitterly.

Shaking his hand firmly, I said to him, "Keep the beads on as they are." It was a warm hand.

Recovering his composure, he said quietly, "I thank you very much for your kindness. Goodbye." And with these few words, he disappeared through the door into the adjoining room. That was his end.

With Lieutenant Scott, I found my way out of the altar room into the open air. A moment or two later there was a loud crash. It was a quarter past five o'clock.

About twenty-five minutes afterwards, a coffin about six feet long and a foot and a half deep was carried into the mortuary by four G.I.'s. I took off the lid and saw there his body lying covered with white cotton cloth from head to foot. I read softly the Amida Sutra for it and prayed with clasped hands. When I left, the sun of April 26, was just rising in the east.

Several days later, that is, on May 2nd, I visited Lieutenant Scott, as I was anxious to know what had been done with Yuri's ashes. The Lieutenant did not know. So I wrote

\* See Glossary.

a letter on behalf of Yuri's mother to Lieutenant-General Eichelberger, the Commanding Officer of the Eighth Army, in an attempt to fulfill Yuri's last wishes.

On May 23rd, I received an answer from the General, the original of which, signed by him, I sent to Yuri's mother, and copies of which I gave to Sugamo and kept for myself.

The letter read:

It is most regrettable that I cannot deliver his remains to you due to Military Regulation ——. Also I cannot tell you where they are buried.

Some days later his mother, Tsuru, sent me a telegram asking me to send her son's posthumous name. I wrote down "Kojumuroin Shakusokei" and sent it to her. Giving such names became one of my duties thereafter, when prisoners were executed.

Tsuru Yuri sent many moving letters to her son, but the following, sent to me and received after his death, is the one I should like to summarize here. In it I can detect her intuitive understanding of Japanese history, in the sense that she realizes belatedly that she herself was to a degree responsible for her son's doom:

It is his mother's fault. . . . Kei lost his father at the age of three and after that was brought up only by me, his mother. He liked soldiers and military things from childhood. When I sang night after night to him, "When dear Kei grows up he will ride on horseback waving a saber and wearing decorations and shouting Hey, ho!" he would go happily to sleep. He also liked toy-weapons and stilts best of all playthings. I remember that once in those days Mr. Uchida of the Honganji sect called on me with his son, a

child of Kei's age, and I gave the boy a toy saber and a gun, but the father refused them saying, "The son of a priest does not play with weapons." Looking back on that incident now, I am filled with remorse. It is utterly my fault that Kei became a war criminal. I entreat forgiveness of Buddha, prostrating myself before Him.

Because of my mistake in bringing him up for twenty-six years with the sole intention of making him a soldier, Kei became a criminal. His crime is indeed the result of his stupid mother's fault.

And yet though so ashamed of myself and so beside myself, I felt that I must see him, and making up my mind suddenly, I left Kyushu for Tokyo on January 17th. But owing to some hitch in the procedure, I could not see him. Following the instructions of an official in the Foreign Ministry, I sent a mother's petition for his life to General MacArthur's G.H.Q., to which I have received this kind answer. Won't you please read its contents to Kei?

April the 25th  
Tsuru Yuri

To Hanayama Sensei \*

3.

*The Boy Who Would Not Sing the "Kimigayo"*

An eighteen-year-old boy, Katsunori Tamura, was executed at 4:49 A.M. on May 17, 1746. It was the next execution after Yuri's.

On the night before the execution I noticed that the cell

\* See Glossary.



was the same one Yuri had been confined in. The boy was lying on the mats reading a book.

"What are you reading?" I asked. He showed me the cover. It was *Tesshu Yamaoka*, a romantic tale of concealed loyalty.

"I asked the jailer a little while ago to lend me a book, and this is what he brought me." He had already read two hundred pages since finishing supper at five.

"Haven't you any words to send to your father and mother and brothers?" I asked. To this, he answered that he had written a long letter already, working on it from the previous night till three o'clock that afternoon. He said he had handed it to the officer.

"Now you are going to the place where both your elder brother and your grandparents whom you have never seen are living. Your parents and living brothers—and also I—will follow you without fail sometime later."

He listened and nodded. I gave him his posthumous name and cut his hair and clipped his fingernails. He had let the nail of his left little finger grow long, probably in preparation for that day.

I offered my hand.

"Now, write that last letter until morning," I urged.

"Goodbye, sir." He gave my hand a hearty shake back.

Next morning, less than an hour before his execution, I visited him once more.

"As this is your last chance to use the Chinese characters you worked so hard to learn, do write something, if only your name," I begged him.

So this time he took up a pencil and wrote:

Father and Mother: I hope you will be healthy forever.

I have nothing to regret. Only I am sorry that I could not do anything worthwhile for you. We shall meet some day in the other world.

At 4:27 in the morning.

“This is the last time you will ever write these characters which you have studied since primary school days and by which you have been able to live,” I said. “And now set your mind at rest.”

Only then did he shed a tear or two.

Urged by the voice calling, “Only a few minutes more,” we left the cell. He buttoned his thin summer coat and put on his rubber-soled shoes. He went to the execution ground in the same clothes he had been wearing to work in Hokkaido.

During my reading of the Holy Scripture he listened quietly with lowered head.

But when I asked, “Shall we sing the ‘Kimigayo’?” he answered “No.”

We exchanged a last cup of water.

His last words were, “Goodbye, sir.”

His was not a war crime. If my memory is correct, it was the murder and robbery of an American soldier, committed with two other youths at Sapporo on December 19, 1745.

#### 4.

#### *Thanks to Mother Earth*

Ex-Captain Isao Fukuhara was a young man who had been knocked unconscious by a machine-gun bullet after having

seized several "Tochikas" \* in the China war theater, who was then sent back to a hospital in Japan, and who, upon recovery, became the second commandant of Omuta P.O.W. Camp.

After he was sentenced to death, he said to me, "I am sorry that my parents, wife, brother and sisters whom I left at home are in so much trouble because of me."

One day he attempted suicide in his cell. But he was discovered in time and failed. After that he changed utterly. He read Buddhist books and wrote down his thoughts on them, sparing scarcely a moment from this work till the end of his life. By getting up before sunrise, sitting up till "lights out," and finishing assigned prison tasks, such as polishing or painting, quicker than others, he saved as much time as possible for reading. Even the exercise period, which came once a day in front of the cells, he spent reading.

He asked for Buddha's blessing at every meal. He also stepped on the scales every time he bathed, to make sure he had not lost weight. He wanted to keep his health so as to be able to study to the very last.

One day he was visited by his old father who, dreaming of this interview with his son, had come up to Tokyo from their native Masuda-cho, Shimane-ken, swaying in crowded trains for two days and nights. He spent the whole thirty minutes permitted for conversation through the iron-meshed screen delivering a Buddhist sermon to the old man, and neither referred to his own personal affairs nor did he allow his father to open his mouth and tell him how things were going at home.

And I remember how, whenever I saw him, the joy hid-

\* Military blockhouses

den in his heart appeared on his face in a sort of brown brightness.

On the night before his execution, I visited his cell in 5-C at eight o'clock and talked with him for about an hour. Already five months had passed since I had seen him first in the chapel, and this was our eleventh personal meeting. I felt I had nothing more to worry about for him.

Seeing me outside the iron screen, he smiled his joy.

My first words were, "I have nothing to preach to you more. Your state of mind is now such that you will meet death in the spirit in which you would encounter any other experience. You know now that though your flesh may cease to exist after its thirty years of life, your soul will live forever. You were the first prisoner I talked with personally in this prison, and since then, whenever we have met, I have been moved with admiration. When I realize that I cannot see you any more after tonight, my heart is filled with sorrow, but now I know that at last you can go to the place you have been longing for. Go straight on your way to eternity!"

He had once told me that he had read three times my Japanese translation of "Ojoyoshu," and was keeping the volume as good as new by covering it with newspaper. When I entered the chaplains' office that very morning and found the book lying on my desk, I had a feeling that his execution had been announced. And now I held that book in my hands.

I said: "Your father, when he stopped at my house on his visit to Tokyo, told me he wanted this book very much. But I replied that I should first like to have you read it. Now, if you don't mind, I'll write out for him its history:"

This book that you have read three times in the prison at

Sugamo I now respectfully present to you and your revered father.

8:05 P.M., August 8,  
In the solitary cell  
Shinsho Hanayama

He thanked me heartily, holding it in his hand, and then after a moment's thought added with his own pen:

8 o'clock P.M., August 8th  
I have received this book from Hanayama Sensei and am thankful for a kindness which is too great for me.  
To my dear father

From Isao

Then I clipped his ten fingernails and cut his hair, kneeling in front of him. I explained the origin of the important Buddhist ceremony of cutting the hair of a novice, and he listened to my words with drooped head, smiling.

Outside the locked iron screen, Lieutenant Scott kept anxious eyes fixed on the scissors. But there was no need for worry. Soon I passed them out to him.

Then I carefully stood the portable sanctuary on the desk and read the *Shoshinge* and *Wasan* with Fukuhara softly. And leaving the sanctuary there so that he might spend his last night with Buddha, I went out of the cell.

At 4:30 in the morning, a little before execution time, I visited him once more. The comforters were already neatly folded up in the middle of the cell. And when I opened the door and stepped inside, he put both hands on the mat and bowing his head low, said, "Sir, I thank you very much for coming to this dirty room again."

Sitting down I said, "Hello, have you slept well?"

"Yes, sir; I have slept enough to prepare for the last journey of my life."

I was surprised. Because, though I had gone to bed in the cheerful society of Lieutenant Scott and the others, I had slept fitfully and wakened several times. How then could Fukuhara, who was going to die in a matter of hours, have slept so well? From the superscription of the three letters he handed me I could see that he must have gone to bed by half-past ten last night at least.

At the end of the letter to his father were these words:

"I am going to sleep from now to make preparation for the journey."

And to his wife:

"Let me sleep from now to prepare for the journey.  
Live cheerfully."

And to me, in the form of a poem:

"I wish to see from the other earth

The Sun Flag of peaceful Japan fluttering in the morning wind." \*

All were dated "10 o'clock P.M." And after his name in the one to me, he had added later, "disloyal and unfaithful subject." I took it as the deep reflection of a man who had been awakened to the light of the true wisdom of Buddha.

On the way to the execution place he turned to Lieutenant Scott and said, "Thank you very much for allowing me to tread again on the mother earth." By that one phrase, I, who had lived so long and walked so thoughtlessly on the great earth, was made to reflect deeply on myself.

\* See the bottom illustration of frontispiece.

He left this world filled with gratefulness and rejoicing. And yet of all the men I met in prison Fukuhara had tormented himself most with the problem of life and death. The diary and notes he made during that short period amounted to several bulky volumes. Even my own notes culled from them crowded three notebooks of four quires each.

I shall give here an abridgment of his three last letters to his father, wife, and me:

(Letters of Isao to his Father)

My last words to my dear father. Father: In the first place, please set your mind at ease and take care of yourself. Isao is always praying for that only. I shall be beseeching you again and again from the yonder world to take care of yourself. No matter how many troubles you may have, whenever you remember Isao please take care of your health.

I think you know well what Saint Shinran taught us in his book. "Out of evil comes good" and "Give us the power to change misfortune into happiness." He also taught in his *Wasan* that "where there is much ice there can be much water. If our evil is great so is our good." I think that not to accept misfortune merely as sorrow but to change it into power by making the best of it is the principle our family should follow from now on. Though I am scorned by people, remember I did not die miserably on a straw mat of sickness, but I was executed. I beg you to make the best of my execution for the sake of the family. To put the matter in other words, if you receive from Buddha the power to change this misfortune into joy enabling you to stand up again, nothing will please me more. Stand up and lead all the family, and rise from this sorrow with strong will.

I cannot express my gratitude to you for having worked

so hard and suffered so much trouble for my sake during these thirty years. When I think of you praying and struggling to save me and going without sleep, how many nights have I spent tormented to tears with remorse!

But fortunately, what I have gone through has given me the chance to gain a holy power from Buddha. I have lived the blessed days with much joy till the last. Though I will be executed and cannot do anything material to help you, I would like to present you this rejoicing mind as a token of my filial devotion.

As is written in the *Tannisho*, "true salvation can be attained only by leaving all evil and good to fate and praying for the help of Buddha." I believe that true power, the kind that is not embarrassed by adverse circumstances but rather utilizes them, and that gives active strength, and that changes misfortune into happiness, comes only through prayer to Buddha.

To pray to Buddha is to live blessed by Buddha's heart and strength. Through prayer, Buddha becomes our helper and makes us live.

I was tormented very much. I suffered much. But after entrusting everything to Buddha, I came to feel somewhat at ease, and determining to live a reformed life began to be assiduous in spiritual study.

I think that the very fact that I am to be executed has improved my character and brought me to a higher state. It was this misfortune that gave me the chance of being blessed by Buddha, a blessing which otherwise I should not have attained in a million years. Even if the body decays, the soul remains. I rejoice that my understanding has been broadened as a result of being favored with the strength of Buddha.

This life is transitory. Man "cannot even know that he will not die today or tomorrow," Shinran tells us. Man is



too ignorant to be pitied. And yet, as man is so transitory and his remaining life so ephemeral, it is all the more important. So now is the very time to stand up strongly. Now is the time to requite Buddha's mercy. "Now is the good time. If you don't start now, you will be faced by insurmountable difficulties," says Saint Renryo.

What complaint can I make when I reflect that all men must die sooner or later? Why should we feel sad? Rather, we should stand up vigorously, chanting Buddha's name, and start on the road of thankfulness, rejoicing that we can live owing to His mercy. Then, Buddha's power will become our own power. We will be able to tread on this road of thankfulness, and we will begin to want to help others. This is the way to make our house more prosperous. I am glad that I have found this out. In other words, it is the strength of the great Mercy that makes us glad to meet this opportunity which changes my misfortune into the happiness of our family.

If you can know this power of Buddha that makes us live, is there any greater joy? Please pray to Buddha from the depth of your soul and receive this limitless Power without reserve. This Power which is stronger than all other things. Even if you suffer any adversity and become sad, you will never complain or be worried on account of it. It has become clear to me that to pray to Buddha is the eternal way. It brings us such strength that we can weep without becoming gloomy, rejoice without becoming wayward, and lift up our spirits. Please, father, use my misfortune as a chance to enable my family to escape from sorrow and attain true joy.

Father, please set your mind at ease, and pray to Buddha calmly from the depth of your heart. One more thing that I would like to ask of you for the sake of the family, and this is that you will designate one day each month on which

all the family can worship Buddha slowly, calmly, and steadily. On that day too, let them read what I have written here, so that they can brace one another up and march forward bravely hand in hand. A meeting two or three hours long will do. Though I know you are busy, I beseech you again to appoint at least one day a month as a day to be filled with gratefulness to Buddha and the joy of living, a day to brace up your minds. On that day, let them make clean their house, bodies, and hearts. That day will be the very day when the great Mercy of Buddha will fall upon all of you. I believe that such spiritual richness will greatly help to promote both your physical and spiritual health.

From your son dying on the gallows

(To his Wife)

From your husband, Isao

To my darling Michiko:

Michiko, my dear wife, whom I cannot help thinking of at the same time as my mother and my daughter! I am very grateful that I have lived a really happy life owing to your constant help.

I feel very sorry for you and the rest of the family, but I think you know better than anyone else my feeling.

Last night the course of my new journey was decided, and early tomorrow morning I shall leave here for the warm and generous bosom of Mother Earth. I can return to my beautiful native place. I can also go back to your side. This makes me very happy. And I can return to the side of our children, too.

As I can start on my journey to the wide world of eternity in such a joyful spirit, I find myself trembling with expectation.

I trust you to bring up our children, though sometimes

they may give you much trouble and become a heavy burden. I know you will never deviate from the right path of a woman and a mother for such a comparatively trivial difficulty as this. At the time of your visit here last May you showed me so strong but womanly a courage that I was astonished. I cannot express in words how deeply I was moved then.

There will be many troubles, restrictions, and anxieties for you from now on, but I hope you will overcome these difficulties and live a worthwhile life.

Michiko! Don't forget that there is a true road to eternity! Don't forget to pray to Buddha! It was because I could hear the sacred call of Buddha that I gained the joy of living through eternity. Make Shuko and Ichiu also understand the meaning of these words.

Compared with eternity, thirty or fifty years are nothing. But in the case of a human being these thirty or fifty years are the time he has to live. So never treat your life lightly. Live a long life worthy of a respectable woman and mother. March forward steadily and carefully, praying to Buddha. Read fully what I have written.

(On the night of the same day.)

Michiko! Truly, you live in a wide world. In the world of Buddha there is no limit. There is nothing to fear. But don't forget to pray.

I have been given my posthumous name by Hanayama Sensei:

“Koku-Muryo-In-Shaku-Sho-Kun”

I am constantly praying that you may live in the world of Buddha. Worship somehow. Only it is regrettable that I cannot express my feelings well on account of my inability to choose the right words. Tonight I had the privilege of reading the *Shoshinge* together with Hanayama Sensei for the first time. I was much pleased.

(At 10:00 P.M., August 8th.)

To prepare for the journey let me sleep from now.  
Live cheerfully.

Isao Fukuhara  
Disloyal and unfaithful subject at Sugamo Prison

5.

*A Prison Diary*

Ex-Captain Kaichi Hirate was an intellectual graduated from the Osaka Foreign Language College. He wrote a long diary. And he also composed many poems from which I have selected the following:

Having entered Sugamo:

I am a man who can do nothing anyway,  
So today also, I shouted alone facing the wall.

At Yokohama:

Opening my eyes, I saw the window frozen white.  
It was not a dream that I was in prison.  
Turning my face upward and muttering a silent poem,  
I gazed at the white wall with glistening eyes.  
The voice of my neighbor saying that it's better to die than to live  
Struck my ears with sadness.

Entering into religion:

Washing away the dust of the past,  
From today I devote myself to prayers to Buddha,  
To seek for eternal truth.

When I pray and hold service to Buddha,  
The image of my dear mother floats before my eyes.  
When I finish my daily service and go to bed,  
I feel inexpressibly grateful.

Knowing now that everything in the world is vain,  
I make up my mind not to weep any more over my father's letter.

Talk with an insect in the cell:

A round little insect, whose name even I don't know,  
Crawled out, and crawled across the book I was reading.

In this room there are two living creatures.  
I feel that my heart communicates with that of the insect—  
An insect that has trodden step by step  
And is now at a loss at the end.  
For the yonder place is too high to climb.

The day before his execution:

How glad I am today,  
Since I can go to see my mother who has been waiting for me  
so long!

Dear Mother! The time has come  
When I can serve you again at your side.  
Owing to a boat, the help of Amida Buddha.  
I, though humble, can go to my mother's side.†

I think you can feel in these poems the movements of his mind during the nine months in prison. Though up to then he seldom laughed, he laughed often when I visited his cell on the day before his execution.

He greeted me almost merrily and said, "Sir, I have

\* See Glossary.

† For other poems by Hirate see Appendix II.

written these poems today." Among the five pieces he showed me were the three last printed above.

Just before he mounted the gallows, he suddenly asked, "Sir, which is the direction of Hokkaido?" And facing the land where his father was, he bowed reverently.

His last letter to me (on the evening of August 22nd):

To Hanayama Sensei:

I am very sorry that I have troubled you so much. Especially when I realize how busy you are, I do not know how to thank you. It was by the favor of a truly merciful Providence that I could have my hair and fingernails cut by you.

I think that such things as the war and the defeat are also due to Providence. If I can atone for them with one death, I will gladly sacrifice this body and life. I am now filled with gratefulness for having been given this present calm state of mind by Buddha, under your guidance.

When I read the *Tannisho*, its depth and strength seem to reproach me. This is, I think, because I am still imperfect. Even only for being made conscious of my imperfection I am deeply thankful to Him.

I am now filled with the joyful realization that, gladly yielding up body and soul, I am saved by Buddha's Original Promise. Encouraged by you and thinking that they might give some help to those who must follow me, I have attempted to write strong notes at random. But it was too hard a task for me; as I lack literary talent I could not put down what I really thought. Moreover, my views and my faith are too imperfect and childish. So I am addressing them to my "fellow-students" not as advice but merely as a token of friendship. If my feeling during the long period of eight months during which I have been guided by you is expressed in them, I am satisfied.

I thank you again for your kindness. I do not know how to put into words my gratitude.

Here I have selected extracts from the numerous notes and the diary Hirate left. In the latter can be found vignettes of some of the major war criminals:

*My Prison Diary—knowing as I do that none may read it.*

*On a certain day of a certain month:*

The exercise hour. Looking down on the yard of the adjoining block from my third-floor window, I noticed many ex-generals such as Tojo, Araki, and Hata walking in twos and threes. It seems that the A Class men have been shifted there. In the funny attire of a shirt and drawers, with a brown soft hat and clogs, General Tojo is walking, nodding at the words of Ambassador Oshima. It looks like Mr. Oshima, with colored glasses and a straw hat, is telling him an amusing story.

Shirtless and with a towel tied round his head turban-fashion, General Araki is walking briskly in big strides on the moat outside. It looks as though he wanted to get the greatest amount of exercise possible in the short time allowed.

The old man strolling now right, now left in the white kimono like a Shinto priest's is General Minami.

Colonel Kingoro Hashimoto walks like a young man, with his tall body stiff as a ramrod. Though it may be impolite for me to call him arrogant-looking, that's the word for it.

With a military cap drawn low over his eyes as if to shut out the sunlight, General Hata is strolling together with a

couple of other men. Right behind him is General Itagaki. In only shirt and shorts, he looks like an old villager. You can feel his boldness in his appearance.

In the shade of a lone pine tree standing in the center of the exercise-ground, I can see a crutch. It's Mr. Shigemitsu. Though I can't see his face well, I feel a pity for him. I once heard him speak in my college days at Osaka. I just happened to think of it.

What are those men, who were once Generals and important officials, thinking now in their deepest hearts?

Suddenly, just now, I become aware of my own present fate—of myself, who cannot even go outside but must look down on all this from a window of the third floor. Those who were once respected as the leaders and patterns of the nation are now strolling under my eyes in completely altered circumstances.

*AUGUST 15TH. THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SURRENDER  
DAY*

One year has passed since the surrender. I never expected to live so long. It's a queer thing. Four solid pages of today's paper are filled with various memories, reflections, and criticisms. When I look back I see how I have changed. But Japan also has changed—the greatest change she ever had. How will future historians describe this age? It is perhaps only here in this corner of Sugamo that a man has the leisure to indulge in such vain, sweet reminiscence. But change of itself isn't bad. The question is, what is the nature of the change. It was the fate of Japan that she must change sooner or later, though this particular misery was caused by the terrible war.



*On a certain day of a certain month:*

The last day of Captain Fukuhara.

At last Captain Fukuhara has left us. I have thus parted already from two persons with whom I tasted the bittersweet of life. The other was Lieutenant Yuri. Some of us go first, while the others remain here. There's nothing I can do about it, yet I feel sad as I am one of those who go later.

I suppose Captain Fukuhara went to his death with a smile, believing in a bright future for our mother country. When one determines to offer his life as a sacrifice for a greater thing, there opens for him the true way to death. I remember the gentle words of the Captain's: "Let's take care of ourselves till the last." For me who am to follow him soon, they were a gift more precious than many grandiloquent sentences. The Captain's clarion tones when he recited a poem just before he left are still ringing in my ears. I feel now that the way I should march has been made clear to me.

Captain Fukuhara! May your soul rest in peace!

*On a certain day of a certain month:*

On the way to the bath, I met ex-General Tojo. He may have been on the way to the interrogation-room. He was in a gray suit with a white shirt. A guard walked by his side; another guard was behind him. When suddenly I became aware that "that's Tojo!", my feelings went utterly blank. As he neared me, he suddenly dropped his eyes as if to avoid my glance. Although I nodded slightly I don't think he noticed me. But I could clearly detect his intention to drop his eyes and avoid mine. Watching the figure of the General who is now the object of the derision, scoffing, contempt, and hatred of all the world, but which he must endure as a man,

I forgot my own situation for a while. For a moment I felt that we had met in secret man to man, and that all barriers were down between us.

Probably the ex-General will atone for his faults by paying the dearest treasure possessed by man.

*On a certain day of a certain month:*

I read in a newspaper that ex-General Araki has written seven hundred Japanese poems here. I feel that my "connection" with him is close because I entered this prison with him and Mr. Kuzuu of the Black Dragon Society. Besides that, I have talked with him several times. And during the exercise-hour I have seen Mr. Shiratori, Mr. Kuzuu, and Mr. Kanokogi chatting pleasantly with him.

Written the evening before my death.

"If I can attain the truth in the morning——"

This thought moves me deeply because I was brought up under the spiritual influence of Confucianism, and also there is something about it which appeals to my Japanese blood. Death is the most serious problem in human life. Life is the most valuable thing, which cannot be exchanged for any other thing. But even life can be easily thrown away, if we can find something more valuable. The question is whether we can find a more significant thing than death.

The war destroyed many lives. I also lost many friends, acquaintances, and subordinates. When the war was at its height I could rejoice, because their death had a meaning. I regret now that I survived them. But reflecting again, I realize that I also can still die normally enough. I am only one step behind them.

Now I am going to return calmly to the eternal world of Buddha.

This may sound self-complacent and arrogant coming from one who is a mere prisoner in time of peace. In view of their present attitude, the public might well think so. But I can stand their criticism. Recently I ran across a poem written in the prison diary of a converted Communist:

"On the feet of a condemned prisoner walking with drooping head  
The autumn sunlight is shining faintly."

Well can I grasp the idea of this poem. I can even feel the cold atmosphere of the white scene, and the feeling of the writer and the man written about.

A fact that I became conscious of just now is that in reading this poem I could do so objectively from the viewpoint of a third person. This seems to show that I am mentally sane enough.

I am now confined in one of those cells in which there are several other doomed men. I rejoice, whenever I meet them, to find that they have the same feeling as mine. With death, the individual life ends. The body as a physical entity ceases to exist. But the individual soul does not die with the body.

To discuss only death is a mistake. Without death there could be no life.

Analyzing the nature of war, which is the most tragic event in human experience, I come to think of the relations between the individual and the State, between the individual and his people or race. War is the giving and taking of life and death. In a word, that is why it is so tragic.

Our country has been defeated. Though she was defeated after sacrificing too much, upon those sacrifices her recon-

struction will be built. The cast-off pebbles now become a part of this new foundation.

As a result of this war, men have tasted a bitterer cup than ever before. No, that is too trivial a figure. Let me say, rather, that the new pilots of our national ship will sail a sure course now that we give up our lives and drown.

As those who die and those who remain are equally Japanese, I feel confident that all will be well in the end.

## 6.

### *Shinto Prayers Before A Buddhist Altar*

Ex-Captain Masaki Mabuchi was a tall young man who was always smiling. On the day of his execution he sang the *Kimigayo* and *Umiyukaba* repeatedly in a loud voice in his single cell.

He had been a Shinto priest of the Tado Shrine in Mie Prefecture.

He said to me, "I wish I could go to the place of execution in the white garments of a Shinto priest." But the wished-for clothes arrived at Sugamo from his home only after his death.

In the altar-room near the gallows, after I had read the Buddhist Holy Scriptures, he offered the Shinto prayer of "*Oharai*" (Complete Purification). Then he recited the lyrics of *Umiyukaba* and *Musashino*. We drank and exchanged the last cup of water. Then, facing the direction of his home, he bowed low and shouted three times, "*Tenno Heika Banzai!*" (Long live the Emperor!)

Then I shook his hand firmly and sent him off across the

court to the gallows. Almost immediately I heard a loud sound. Half an hour later I read the *Jushoge* before his coffin.

He loved children passionately and wrote his last letter to his two-year-old son. In it I recall the following passage:

"When I close my eyes, your little figure in the arms of your Mother floats before them. When I gaze at it more intently, it becomes that of a young man."

## 7.

*Praying to Buddha and Marching on the White Lane*

After he knew he was going to die, ex-Lieutenant Uichi Ikegami said to me in the chapel: "If a man like you were to be imprisoned here, he would surely become a better man." To which I could only answer, "It is true." He had been expressing his resentment at recent popular opinion as shown in the newspapers. His words were a cry from the heart of a man who had suffered and changed.

On the night before his execution I visited his cell. He folded up his blanket and made a seat for me. He smiled and said, "I was waiting for you to come; here is a *haiku* I wrote today:

"I feel now that  
My heart is as round as a bead."

He felt no more grudges or apprehensions. But when our talk touched on his coming execution, he said, "As I was a swimming champion, I'm afraid my breath will not be stopped so easily."

I told him what I had heard. "Unconsciousness follows instantly on the breaking of the nerve in the neck. It isn't a question of strangling."

Reassured, he nodded with a smile: "Oh, so?"

Just before leaving his cell a few hours later, he sat at the desk finishing his last long letter to his mother:

"I'm going to start now.

"For me there remains nothing but praying to Buddha and marching on the white lane to eternity.

"At 4:45 A.M. February 14, 1747.

"Uichi."

It was two minutes past five A.M. after the Buddhist service had ended, that he was executed.

## 8.

### *A Merry Departure*

On July 3, 1748, eight condemned prisoners went to the gallows.

About 8 o'clock in the evening of the 1st, with Colonel Shmahl, the commanding officer, in the center, I, together with the adjutant, Major Brindenstein (a chaplain), four or five other officers and a sergeant-interpreter, were waiting for the coming of the condemned prisoners. We were there to deliver to them the announcement of their execution. It was a room about 12 by 16 feet on the first floor of a detached building which had formerly been the women prisoners' ward. A big desk was set before us in such a way that those who

received the announcement would stand facing the commanding officer's chair in the center.

The first of the men to be brought in was Hajime Honda, a civilian formerly attached to the Japanese Army. Accompanied by two sturdy American sergeants, he stood barefooted in front of the commanding officer. His clothes were of the kind reserved for sentenced prisoners; they had big P's stamped on them.

Honda bowed his head slightly as the Nisei interpreter read the words, ending: "At one-thirty in the morning of July the 3rd, the punishment will be carried out."

With no sign of surprise, Honda signed the two documents placed before him.

In the same way the same announcement was made to M.P. ex-Lieutenant Sadamoto Motokawa, Matsukichi Muda, Sadamu Takeda, Yoshiichi Takagi (all three civilians attached to the Army), ex-Colonel Iju Sugazawa, ex-Captain Ikkan Suyematsu, and ex-Sergeant Masakatsu Hozumi, one after another.

According to what I heard later, as no execution had been held since that of ex-Lieutenant Uichi Ikegami in February of the preceding year, both these prisoners themselves and their neighbors in other cells thought the death-sentence would be commuted, and some of these later even went so far as to congratulate them.

On the evening of the 2nd I visited their cells to give them my last sermon and to cut their hair and fingernails for their families.

Always jovial, Honda, Muda, Takeda, Takagi and Hozumi greeted me heartily: "Sir, we have been waiting for you."

As ex-Colonel Sugazawa's hair was already clipped short, he asked me to cut the hair of his armpits, which I did.

Honda, who was the son of a *sake*-dealer and fond of drinking, said, "Sensei, what wouldn't I give for a drink!" I decided, if possible, to fulfill his wish in some fashion.

A little before one A.M. July 3rd, I was waiting for them to come downstairs to the altar-room on the first floor. The first group consisted of Honda, Motokawa, and Muda. Two guards accompanied each of them. Both their arms and their legs were in chains. One after another the three men offered a stick of incense I handed them to the altar of Buddha. They then followed with strong voices my reading of the *Sanshoge*. After that, I gave them one by one some wineglasses which I had filled and put on the altar before they arrived. They drank down the wine smacking their lips.

Honda asked, "Won't you please give me one more cup?" I did so.

All three ate of the cakes and drank the farewell water. Two of them thanked the guards.

Led by ex-Lieutenant Honda, who was the senior officer of the three, they sang the *Kimigayo* in cheerful voices.

Needless to say, I sang with them. After it was over, they gave three banzais for Imperial Japan.

"I have troubled you greatly."

"Farewell, sir."

And they all thanked me. Lieutenant Motokawa asked me, "Will you kindly send this portable altar which I've had in my cell, these Holy Scriptures, and these beads to my home?" But I accepted only the altar and the book, suggesting that he wear the beads till the end.

Shaking their hands firmly one by one, I sent them off in the direction of the execution-building. Over the courtyard the electric light was flooding as if for a night baseball game.

Soon after that, the second group came down. They were



Takeda, Takagi, and Suzawa. Led by ex-Colonel Sugazawa, they sang and shouted the *Kimigayo* and *Banzai* as loudly as the preceding group had done. Then Takeda sang an *utai* [a narrative poem] which, so he said, he had composed that very morning. He seemed well satisfied with his effort, saying that he could sing louder here than upstairs in his cell. "Sir, if there's any time left, please let me sing *Takasago* [a song of congratulation]. For this is a happy occasion," said he. And then they left cheerfully.

The last group consisted of Suematsu and Nozumi. Though in the case of the others I had heard gay voices sending them off upstairs, now from that direction there was only silence.

After the reading of the Holy Scriptures, Nozumi asked for another glass of wine. I filled the cup to the brim.

The two men ate the remaining cakes, and after the *Kimigayo* and the *Banzai* had ended, Nozumi sang there before the altar a local song of his native Kumamoto:

"It rains and rains,  
Men and horses get wet——"

Captain Suematsu, who was a Christian, asked me if he mightn't sing a hymn. "Of course you may," I answered. And so he softly sang a hymn, and then prayed to God, ending with a fervent "Amen."

At 3 o'clock in the morning, in the front of eight new coffins lying in a row, I read softly the Amida sutra and prayed to Buddha with clasped hands.

The departing men had left their wills and letters with me—writings which showed their respective characters, vary-

ing in the depth of their faith and in the height of the Truth attained.

I copied the full texts to preserve them; but the extracts recorded below are the passages which best communicate to us the states of the writers' minds on that final day. I have not changed a word.

(Record of Hajime Honda)

To my dear wife:

I have trusted my father to look after you.

Don't worry about anything and work hard.

I pray you will be happy.

Now the end of my life is only a question of time—

Tonight or tomorrow?

Perhaps when this letter reaches you, I shall have already started  
from Sugamo for Heaven.

Live cheerfully.

Tell Mother, "Please be happy and keep well."

And also give my kindest regards to Brother and Sister.

Outside it is drizzling.

It's July. I suppose they are planting rice in my native country.

Remember 1:30 A.M., July 3rd.

After one year and one month at last has come

The day that I have been anxiously waiting for.

I will go! I'll go up the stairs to the gallows merrily like a man.

Remember 1:30 A.M., July 3rd.

I have done nothing for you,

And I am very sorry. I apologize to you till my last breath.

I, Hajime, beseech you:

Live in good health.

Don't do anything rash. It's no good to be rash.

Do you understand? I entreat you over and over again not to be  
too hasty.

Improve yourself so that you may be called a true Japanese woman.

I say now at the end of my life that you have been a wonderful wife.

The night of July 2nd—

At last it has come.

1:30 A.M., July 3rd—

We are eight,

And I am the leader. Goodbye.

Look at my last moment.

Flower of flowers of Japanese men.

I have nothing more to say.

Only give me *sake*—

That is the only thing I want to say.

To all of my friends in Sugamo—

I am going now. I hope you will remain in good health,

And I pray that you will return to your native places as soon as  
possible.

And after you return, please build with your hands the glorious days  
of newly born Japan.

I will be praying for it from a corner of Sugamo.

And may you live cheerfully till the last.

Hajime Honda

Goodbye, all of you;

I hope you will enjoy your life cheerfully.

On the good night of July 3rd I leave here

For the world of Amida Buddha.

Goodbye, people of Japan:

Keep in good health; take care of yourselves.

I shall be waiting for you in the other world.

From Hajime

To all my friends:

Letter of Sadamu Motokawa (ex-Lieutenant, Military Police:)

Just now, at seven o'clock in the evening, I have been informed by the authorities that I shall be executed at 1:30 A.M., July 3rd. Though I was already prepared for it, it is horrible none the less. But since I became a condemned prisoner I have been given the privilege of receiving personal sermons, and now that I have devoted myself to religion, I am confident of possessing a calm and determined faith.

#### MY LAST POEM

Wandering now through field and now in mountain,  
How far must a pitiable traveler continue his journey?  
May he not stray, but find a way to the awakening.

(Some minutes past 7 o'clock, July 1st—immediately after the announcement of execution at Sugamo)

To Hanayama Sensei

Sadamu Motokawa

I am so sorry to trouble you, but will you please deliver to my family my "Buddhist Bible," my beads, and my "Leaflet on the Sacred Buddha," in memory of my last reading of the *Shoshinge* just before the execution?

8 o'clock A.M., July 2nd

At Sugamo

Hanayama Sensei

Sadamu Motokawa

Letter of the simple and naïve Muda

Matsuo Muda left many songs in which he expressed his affection for his wife and children. But among those in which

he wrote his memories of the past, there were also some poems describing the A Class war criminals:

Who can recognize the A Class criminals by their present sad and  
pitiful figures?

So different from what they were in the old days.

Generals whose word was law in those days

Are now at the mercy of mere privates.

If the world had not changed, they would still be Generals and  
Admirals;

But now they are sweeping floors in Sugamo.

If the world had not changed, they would still be honorable Generals  
and Admirals;

But now they are serving meals at Sugamo.

He was also extremely indignant over the fact that after the defeat his former superior officers and comrades who had not been arrested had evaded their share of the responsibility for the past. He asked me to send off a letter he had written to one of them, and as it shows how he really felt I quote from it:

### *Letter of Matsuo Muda*

The warm spring has come again. I suppose you are in as good shape as usual without any troubles.

Now, as you know very well, Takada and I have been made the scapegoats for you and the others. How do you feel when you think of us two? You know better than anyone else what really went on at the D.O.W. camp. In the camp you were always putting on airs, calling yourself "Master-Sergeant Kakuyama" or "Warrant-Officer Kakuyama." But once our trial came up you evaded everything and didn't even trouble to take the witness stand.

Do you think you can appear before me honorably?

Read the following and think it over, with your hands on your breast.

The first is the case of an American P.O.W. by the name of Walter Johnson. As the result of his talking to a Korean he was confined in the guard-house on suspicion of espionage, and died there. Of the fact that he was beaten by Captain Fukuhara, I heard from a soldier, and I also saw the bruises. But I did not hear that the guard beat him. I only heard that Captain Fukuhara beat him for purposes of investigation. I also heard that he was starved to death. I have also heard that while he was in the cell you asked two or three times, "Hasn't he died yet?" Moreover, didn't you come around when I was on duty? Though I have forgotten the name, I heard from an orderly that a certain officer was waiting for his death. All the members of our squad including the leader heard that the prisoner had been made to sit on bamboo poles, though it wasn't our squad that ordered it. I don't think the other squads did either.

Next is the case of Knight.

(Author's note. He continued to reproach his former comrade by mentioning specifically case after case—1st Lieutenant Christy's among others.)

I think it was because the captain and you were too strict with the guards and bound them too severely with many regulations that they committed such absurdities. I think the Captain and you were the very leaders in mistreating the prisoners of war.

At the camp you were always putting on airs. And now you pretend to know nothing. It's too mean and contemptible. If you were a man it was your duty to tell the truth at the trial. But as you pretended to know nothing and did not

bear witness for us, we two were punished even for the crimes of the Captain and you and other soldiers. I and Takeda bear you a deep grudge. We shall die cursing your cowardice, I warn you.

As all the war crimes trials concerning Camp No. 17 are over, you will be able to sleep in peace from now on. You are really a lucky man. On the contrary, though there were about seventy Japanese in Camp No. 17, of whom fifty were guards, only we two became war criminals. We are really unlucky. We cannot but think we were sacrificed for the sake of all the members of Camp No. 17.

Don't you sympathize with my feelings?

But when he was dying with religious faith attained, he no longer felt any rancor.

(Abridgment of his letter to his little daughter:)

Sumiko Muda,

Thank you for your letter. You have become able to write really well. I hope you study hard and become a respectable woman.

Though you have been praying to God that your father may return home as soon as possible, I am sorry to say he cannot do so. Father will go to a far-away place and live happily with Yoshinori.

Dear Sumiko, listen to me, I beseech you. From now on you may have much trouble, for your father is no longer alive and your mother is weak and often ill. But you must be obedient to what Mother says and help her by not giving her any trouble. As our family is poor and your mother must work and bring you and Yoshiharu up by herself, please

don't tease her to buy things even when they are plentiful. If you ask her for this or that, you will remind her of your father and make her sad. Please never trouble your mother. And even if others speak ill of me, you must never allow yourself to be defeated by it.

Your brother, Yoshiharu, is too young to understand these things, so you must instruct him in order that both of you may please your mother. By all means you must make your mother forget about your father.

The time for me to leave has come. I beg you over and over again—I entreat you in my last hour—to be kind and helpful to your mother and friendly to your little brother so that you may be praised by other people. I also pray you to take good care of your health.

Before my eyes floats your image of those happy days when you sang, "Mamaohoruse" and "Sunset Glow."

#### THE LAST WORDS OF SADAMU TAKEDA

Now I am imprisoned,  
But my feelings are like other people's.  
Now I take the responsibility and die in Musashino  
For the nation's sake. It's the path of duty which a man should take.

I am grateful as I am living led by Buddha.

9:20 A.M., July 2,  
Sadamu Takeda

The last writing of Yoshiichi Takagi:

Father, Mother, Brothers and Sisters!

The time has come when I must bid goodbye to all of you. I apologize for having done nothing to reward your goodness to me during these thirty-five years since my birth,



and at the same time I thank you for it. During his life a man is necessarily confronted from time to time with many hard or sad events. But you must keep up your spirits and not be overcome by this misfortune. I want you to lead cheerful lives.

For that, you need firm confidence, which comes from the wisdom gained in a right faith. In human society there are many people with false beliefs, such as those who believe in God or Buddha to have their sickness cured or to gain material profit.

The word "Buddha" means "man of conscience" or "awakened man." So the ultimate aim of a human being is to become a Buddha, or an awakened man. Every day of our life is a stepping-stone toward this goal. Don't be misled by shadows. Treading step by step on the good earth, live to seek the things that are imperishable.

Brothers and sisters! Our parents are already old. Please unite your strength and give them no trouble. If you are divided, your strength will fail. Cooperation and solidarity—there is nothing stronger than these, though they are difficult to achieve. Help one another and keep up your spirits! I trust you to do this.

When I received the death sentence last year, I was tormented with mental pain and agony. So it is really strange that I should be able to keep calm and serene now, when I have heard the announcement of execution. I am sure this is because I have been saved by the strength of my faith, which has been bestowed upon me by the great mercy of Buddha. And this is all owing to Shinsho Hanayama Sensei, who has taught me for a long time. Father and brother, won't you thank him for me?

The strength of my faith is really wonderful and great. I hope you also will live with the right faith. Faith is not merely knowledge. Generally speaking, unless a man digests

well the holy words and books and makes them into his own blood and flesh, his faith is not a true one. To make the faith one's own—this is the most important thing, I believe. I have still many things that I would like to write here, but I will not mention trivial minor matters. To put the matter briefly, my last wish is that you will march strenuously along the white road to Buddha. There could be no bigger wish than this. Though it will never be an easy task, I request you not to forget it.

Excuse me for writing in haste. Praying for your happiness, I express both my thanks and my apologies in this short letter.

Joining my hands in prayer,

Yoshiichi

### THE LAST POEMS

Written at 9:08 P.M.

Watched over by the limitless Great Mercy and Great Sorrow,  
Now newly-born peaceful Japan is growing up.

With all passions blown away by the wind of the Great Sorrow,  
Build a true happy paradise.

The last writing of ex-Colonel Iju Sugazawa  
On the night of July 2nd

From Iju

To Tatsue, my son:

About eight o'clock this evening I had my hair and fingernails cut by Shinsho Hanayama Sensei, who is at the same time a professor of Tokyo University and a priest, and was given by him my posthumous name: "Kojuumryoin-Shaku-Shoju-Koji." Thus my mind becomes all the more calmly settled.

Having had my hair and nails cut and having been given a  
posthumous name,  
I now depart calling on the name of Buddha.

Even though my body will disappear like a bubble of water,  
My soul will remain and protect you forever.

God and Buddha will praise your kind devotion to your father,  
And protect you so that you may be happy forever.

I will describe to my beloved wife and children, who went there  
before me,  
The utterly changed appearance of our country.

When there are many paths to go on,  
Choose a right one by polishing your wisdom.

From ex-Captain Suematsu to his Children

Dear Yoshiko, Shinya, Hideyuki, Issei!

I suppose you are attending school together happily and cheerfully. I have been praying God with tears every night and day till today that you will keep in good health and grow up to be good children. How often have I dreamed of you playing together merrily and brightly like lovely birds!

Also now, thinking of your lovely faces, I am writing this letter. But it has become impossible for me to see and talk with you again. I must bid you goodbye. Please be cheerful and don't quarrel, and be good children. As Yoshiko and Shinya are the elder sister and brother, please lead your younger brothers by the hand. As your mother is alone and busy, I beg you to help her as much as possible. And you must live strongly and go hand in hand. Keep up your spirits. You must study and become respectable citizens. God will surely stretch out His gentle hand to protect and lead you. Your father will also protect you by the side of God.

Don't lament over your father's death. He will be looking forward by the side of God to the day when he will be able to see you again. It's raining tonight. I suppose you are studying pleasantly at your mother's knee. Before my eyes your smiling faces are floating.

Now I am going to pray to God. I call now your names one by one, so that you may be happy and grow up in good health.

Dear Yoshiko! Dear Shinya! Dear Hideyuki! Dear Issei! Be in good health. Goodbye! Goodbye!

I pray once more. You will be honorable citizens. Study hard. You understand the last words of your father, don't you?

From your father

#### THE LAST POEMS

Praising the Glory, I now die.

Adieu, till the day when we shall meet again  
By the side of the Holy Soul.

My wife and children!

I shall wait for you in the glorious land.

—Ikkan

#### THE LAST POEMS OF MASAKATSU HOZUMI

I wish to make a thousand dew-drops on a thousand grasses into  
the beads I take,  
When I cross over the Yellow Spring.

If you have any words to send to the Saints in the Holy Land that  
you have never seen,  
Tell them to the ship now leaving.

Having awakened from a dream of my son, today I leave.  
May the young people of our land be happy!

(Written two hours before his execution)

I, your father, will watch you from Heaven and pray  
That you may live happily,  
When the sweet-flags are in full bloom.

O river in my old country,  
Where I strolled with my sweet dearest one,  
When the evening moon was floating up!

My darling! Never despair!  
March on, following the light of your husband,  
Who has left joyfully.

Though I have nearly forgotten the painful time in the high wind,  
Now I am going to fall in the midnight storm.

Hanayama Sensei has taken the trouble to see me. I am  
spending these last hours really happily. As I have been  
shown such favor by the Sensei, won't you write a letter of  
thanks to him?

Farewell! Goodbye!

To Sumiko Hozumi

From Masakatsu

The last thing he wrote (scribbled on a piece of Japanese  
writing paper in pencil):

Mother! I hope you will keep in good health. As it is very  
hot tonight, probably it will rain tomorrow. Then, excuse  
me please; I go first, a little bit before you.

Thanks to Amida Buddha!

2:04 A.M., July 3, (Just when he was leaving his  
cell).

## 9.

*Five Men, Then Five More*

Another month passed. Then, at eight o'clock in the morning of August 20th, I was again called to Sugamo. As I passed through the entrance hall, I noticed many officers walking importantly to and fro in the corridor. At once I knew intuitively that an execution would be held, but whose I had no idea.

The scene of the formal announcement to the condemned was much the same as in the case of the preceding eight. We gathered in the room on the first floor of the detached building as before: that is, about ten American officers, the Commanding Officer in the center, the adjutant, the judge advocate, Major Brindenstein (a chaplain I have mentioned), Major Walsh (a newly appointed chaplain), a Nisei interpreter (non-commissioned), and others. I was in my Buddhist gown, and was seated near the center of the front row.

Then began the announcement, the prisoners being brought in one by one. They were ten in number and consisted of Kosei Igawa, ex-Captain Junzaburo Toshino, ex-Corporal Kazutani Aihara, ex-Captain Sukeo Nakajima, Sadaji Hiramatsu, Harumi Kawate, Tamotsu Kimura, Kunio Yoshizawa, ex-Sergeant-Major Masatoshi Michishita, and ex-Captain Takaji Murakami—those not otherwise described being civilians formerly attached to the Japanese Army.

The Nisei interpreter sitting next to the Commanding Officer read General MacArthur's approval of the judgment, and the Commanding General of the 8th Army's order of

execution. As he ended with the sentence, "The execution will be performed at zero thirty A.M., August 21st," each of the condemned stepped forward and signed his name on two documents as token of his acceptance. No one wavered, but signed calmly in a firm hand. After signing, they invariably bowed before going out. The ceremony started at half-past nine and took an hour and a half.

I began my round of visits to the cells of the condemned at one o'clock, but didn't finish until after eight that night. The men were all perfectly composed, and all of them handed me their last writings and souvenirs.

After leaving them I carried the Holy Scriptures, candlesticks, incense-burner, cakes, wine and water to the altar-room, and prepared the altar. Then I returned to the Chaplains' office. But by half-past eleven I was back visiting the ten cells and collecting the last letters. When I reached Igawa's cell, I found him rinsing off his soapy body. Stark naked and smiling, he accosted me from within the iron-screen door, saying, "Sir, I'm determined to leave here only after washing away all my dirt." And this before the eyes of the American soldiers on guard. To prepare for death he was cleaning up not only his mind but also his body. So under the circumstances there could be for him no such feeling as bashfulness.

I went downstairs and waited in the altar-room.

First to come down were Igawa, Toshino, Aihara, Nakajima, and Hiramatsu. Having made them offer a stick of incense to the altar one by one, I read the *Sanshoge* in Japanese, all of them joining me in chorus. Then Captain Toshino offered a Shinto prayer, and Captain Nakajima sang a hymn. Led by Captain Toshino, they sang the *Kimigayo* and shouted "Banzai!" three times. Then, when they were drinking the

wine and eating the cakes, Corporal Aihara, who was especially fond of the game of *go* [a kind of Japanese checkers], broke silence and said jokingly, "Let's have a game of *go* now." The others agreed heartily. At this point they each thanked me and left any forgotten letters with me.

Amidst pleasant chatter we exchanged the farewell cup of water, and shaking their hands I bade them farewell.

"Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye!" The word repeated over and over floated back to me as they went out to the execution ground.

Soon after that, Kawate, Kimura, Yoshizawa, Michishita, and Murakami came down. This time, led by Captain Murakami, they sang the *Kimigayo* and shouted "Banzai" three times, and as all were Buddhists there was no hymn or Shinto prayer.

Yoshizawa wanted to leave with me as a souvenir for his wife the symbol of his belief which he had always kept by him during his last days. "Sir, would you please send these beads to my wife?" Thinking the request quite natural I received them. Three other men—Kawate, Kimura, and Murakami—followed his example. As Michishita was wearing his, and couldn't get them off because of the handcuffs, I advised him to go on as he was.

They all turned round to the American guards and said, "I have troubled you very much," or "Thank you."

Finally, as we were shaking hands, Yoshizawa asked me with a smile: "Sir, will you please also shake the hand of my wife—and lead her to belief in your warm Law?"

At 1:30 A.M., I read the Sutra of Amida before the ten coffins lying in a line. And putting my hands together, I offered silent prayers.



When I entered the Officers' Club with the two American Chaplains, the Commanding Officer, an M.P. Colonel of the 8th Army, and several other officers came up one after another and wanted to shake hands with me. Praising the way the condemned men had faced death, they thanked me for my efforts.

From the poems and letters by them and the letters written me by their families, I will try to draw a picture of these men.

The last writing of Igawa:

# TRAVELLING LIGHT

I am like one waiting for a boat.

Casting aside the heavy burden of passionate human love,  
I now start travelling light.

Praying that this country may be glorious forever,  
I will look up at Mt. Fuji as I stand by the side of the boat.

Even when I think of the gallows I must mount,  
I don't flinch now  
But rejoice.

8 A.M., August 20,

Kosei Igawa

The last writing of Junzaburo Toshino:

Having been nurtured by the deep benevolence of the Gods and  
Buddhas,  
Now I leave this world for Them.

Blessed by the Divine Mercy as vast as a mountain,  
Now I am going to sit at the feet of the Gods.

Letter of his wife, Mrs. Hasako Toshino, to me:

Glancing through a newspaper delivered on the hot afternoon of August 22nd, I was astonished. It was, of course, because of the execution of ten war criminals reported in it. According to the article, not only my husband was executed but also Mr. Aihara of the neighboring village, Mr. Murakami, my husband's cell-mate, and others whom I don't know. Those from Ehime Prefecture were executed together. I was utterly overwhelmed, thinking, "Oh, at last the fatal day has come." Sir, were you present? If so, won't you please give me the details of that last scene? Depending on what you tell me, I will at once hold a funeral to console his spirit, and also I will steel myself to giving him up without harboring any further hope.

At least a dozen people have tried to console me during these months, saying that the United States is a merciful country and would never kill her prisoners. And so I have been thinking that his sentence might be commuted. The reality is truly horrible. Now that I see what a fool I have been, I weep more bitterly. What you, the sole witness of this tragedy, tell me to do I will do.

Until today, even though he was not at our side, he has been shedding his light upon me and our children. But if the light has died out, we must go on living with even greater courage.

Sir, couldn't this be all a mistake, and wasn't he transferred to some other place?

Masako Toshino

Hanayama Sensei

Crossing this letter, one of mine let her know that the ex-

ecution certainly had taken place, and that I was keeping his fingernail clippings and hair for her. In return I heard from her again.

August 27th

I received today the sad news about my husband. Through a mysterious coincidence, his last moments were observed by you. I thank you very much for your trouble.

Though I believe I have been prepared for bad news since the day he left for the front eight years ago, yet what a miserable fate it is to experience it now when peace has come again! Eight years—looking back from now they were long, long years.

I sympathized deeply with this feeling of hers, and saw in her case another aspect of the grave misfortunes brought about by the war.

### *The Sugamo Diary of Aihara*

Though the diary written by Kazutani Aihara after he was sentenced to death is very interesting, I shall quote only brief bits of it:

#### *OCTOBER 19 (SUNDAY)*

Today, too, it has been cloudy since morning. Already five months and ten days have passed since I received the sentence. Seeing only white walls, I have become utterly tired of prison life. Of late the meals have been always the same. Breakfast consists of bread, soy-bean soup, dehydrated eggs, green vegetables, canned sweet fruits, butter or cheese, and coffee. When there is a sweet dessert I can enjoy the whole dish. The people outside prison cannot drink

coffee. For noon meal and supper we receive white rice or rice with beans alternately, soy-bean soup, salted vegetables, and coffee. The calorie content is high. I am in good physical condition. Having made "Flower-cards" [used in a Japanese game] out of foreign-style playing-cards, I play with Mr. Igawa every day. Solitaire isn't so interesting, but since we have been put in double cells the time passes much faster.

Occasionally the two of us discuss the question whether our sentences will be commuted or not. And sometimes we discuss various general problems, such as life, society, international politics, the peace treaty, the Tokyo and Yokohama Trials, women, and love, one after another.

While busy debating such problems, I forget for the moment that I am a condemned prisoner. But aware of it again, I become dejected.

We agree sometimes that we are ill-fated. But to consider the matter in another way, I realize that I have gained much. Unless I had had this experience, I could never have known myself and been awakened to humanity. I think it is one of the greatest achievements of my life that I have been awakened to reason and to self-awareness as a human being.

#### *DECEMBER 31ST (WEDNESDAY). FINE*

Besides arranging my personal belongings, I must also adjust my spiritual affairs. Perhaps I shall never again send off such a remarkable Old Year or greet such a New One.

On this night last year, I heard the bell of the night-watchman with both Mr. Ota and Mr. Goto in Multiple Cell No. 24 of 4-C. Again tonight I hear with these ears the same ringing which I never thought would happen a year from then. One who should be dead still lives. The very thought of it fills me with deep emotion.

Offering up a silent prayer and hearing the whirr of the heating fans, my heart is filled with an inexpressible feeling. As I am uneducated, I cannot turn these feelings into literature, but at least I have become able to understand Nature and to appreciate poetry.

"It is drizzling—

Even a nude woman diver wears her straw raincoat  
As far as the beach."

This is really an artistic scene. I will continue to live and cheer up my spirits in this fashion till the bitter end.

My thirty-sixth year, goodbye! [The Japanese generally consider themselves a year older on each New Year's.] I am very grateful to you. My thirty-seventh year begins with the dawn of some hope, though it is very faint!

Be happy! Written at midnight, December 31 . Cell  
No. 9, Block T, Sugamo Prison.

Aihara went to the gallows calmly at 00:30 A.M., August  
21, He left the following letter to me:

At last, tomorrow I shall be executed. But I am very calm. My state of mind is more serene than any I have known before. My gratitude to loving parents and many kind friends occupied my mind at the last moment.

I thank you very much for your kind favor.

The last writing of ex-Captain Sukeo Nakajima:

If any difficulty arises, pray calmly,  
For my soul is always at prayer.

Now I will start for the last battle,  
Looking up at the Glorious Crown.  
Midnight, August 24, Sukeo Nakajima

From Hiramatsu to his fellow-prisoner, Araki, who remained behind:

From Sadaji Hiramatsu

I have become so composed that I myself am astonished at it. I tremble with joy merely on speaking the name of Amida Buddha. I thank you again. Take good care of yourself. Lastly, I beg you to lead as many other friends to the Truth as possible.

Praying for your health and happiness, I start at 12 o'clock, August 20th.

Mr. Kuniichi Araki had been in a single "condemned cell" longer than any other man, and taught Buddhism to those who came there later. Recently his death sentence was commuted to twenty years.

## LAST POEM OF REPENTANCE

A man who would kill others is going to be killed today!  
I am really glad, for I, the most ferocious criminal and the most  
vicious idiot,  
Shall become a Buddha tomorrow.

**On the night of August 20th**

## To Hanayama Sensei

## Harumi Kawate

## THE LAST POEM

(Being blessed by the Divine Mercy)

I go on the road calling the name of Buddha in spite of myself.  
How I thank Amida Buddha!

On the night of August 20,  
Tamotsu Kimura, a fool

The poems written in prison by Yoshizawa:

Kunio Yoshizawa, who was a writer by nature, left a volume with me called "The Calendar of May." In it were forty-four short poems and prose bits which, pretendedly the work of a "poet of the streets," were written by Yoshizawa at various times as he sat by his window in Sugamo.

The introductory poem runs as follows:

To my heart, memory is like a mirror of the bright moon.  
It sheds its silvery light all around and breaks sorrowfully against  
my bosom.

A memory must be depicted beautifully.  
It must be hugged softly in trance with the eyes closed.

Another collection of his called "Beautiful Memories" contained such titles as "A Child's Bicycle," "Birthday," "Earthquake," "Heavy Rain," "Standing Alone," "Toothache," "Mischievous," "Errand" and "The Red Camellia": \*

The last letter of Masayoshi Michishita:  
Master as merciful as a living Buddha:

The nearer death approaches the more clearly can I vis-

\* For this last poem see Appendix II.

ualize the land of Buddha. Now the working of my mind as a human being is going to stop. Sir, this human world is a place really to be cursed, isn't it? Viewed from the standpoint of a living man, there are, of course, some beautiful scenes in it. But I think that the phase of human society that makes me die is really bad.

Master, I don't think I did wrong. I merely acted like a human being. Do you think this is too selfish a view?

Therefore I am grateful that I can leave this dirty human world.

To start from the human world for the land of Buddha!

Oh, how beautiful that land will be!

Master, farewell!

Excuse my writing in haste.

Respectfully,

Masayoshi

P.S.—Would you scold me, who am going to die not admitting I am wrong? Please scold me, who cannot bring myself to believe so.

#### THE LAST POEMS OF EX-CAPTAIN MURAKAMI

As a human pillar [sacrifice], I will sustain firmly  
The foundation of this country forever.

Conforming to Buddha's Law,  
I will start with a smile tomorrow.

Takuji Murakami

To Hanayama Sensei

P.S.—Give my best regards to all.



## 10.

*The First Execution by Shooting*

OCTOBER 22ND (FRIDAY)

As it was my lecture day at Tokyo University, I went there as usual.

At the entrance to the Literary Department a jeep was waiting in which sat Mr. Mac (?) of Sugamo Prison. "I've been here for over an hour. Could you come right away?" he asked. He told me that ex-Colonel Satoshi Oie, former Commanding Officer of the Negros Island Garrison, was going to be executed.

Having cancelled my lecture, I got into the jeep, but by the time I reached Sugamo the ceremony of pronouncement of execution had been held.

I was guided to the familiar solitary cell on the second floor of the detached building previously mentioned. That day it housed only one person, whom I had never seen before. I entered the cell and taking my seat asked the prisoner about his status. He answered that he had been transferred from the camp in the Philippine Islands about a month ago to await the review of the judgment by the Philippine Tribunal. He said he was born at Mikekadamura, Chikujo-gun, Fukuoka Prefecture. And his religious denomination was the same as mine, the Jodo Sect.

"As I've heard about you when I was in Block 5B," said he, "I've been wishing to see you."

I had taken a two-week leave of absence at the end of September because of an attack of asthma; so I had known nothing about Colonel Oie until now.

"I am very sorry for you," said I. "But fortunately since yours is the only execution today we can have a long talk."

He seemed pleased with my words and looked somewhat relieved. On that day we had long talks, in the morning, afternoon, and evening. Especially, when I came for the afternoon visit, he sat up straight and requested me to preach for him a last sermon. As he had recently read several Buddhist books in the Philippines, and as we belonged to the same denomination, I felt as if I had known him for a hundred years.

At zero-thirty next morning I received him in the altar-room, and we read the *Sanshoge* together. After that, he shouted out three times, "Banzai for the Emperor!" in a voice full of strength coming from the depth of his abdomen.

"You have indeed a proper voice for a regimental commander!" I said.

"I haven't shouted loudly for so long a time that I was afraid I couldn't do it," he replied, acknowledging my compliment. Then he thanked me, Major Walsh (the American chaplain), and the American guards. He drank the wine and ate the cakes, and after the exchange of the farewell cup of water we went out.

Outside, we entered an autobus marked with the Red Cross. I sat opposite Major Walsh, while Colonel Oie was made to sit next me on my left. Then five or six M.P.'s armed with rifles climbed aboard. We passed through the gate of Sugamo at exactly 1 A.M. Before and behind our bus, more than ten jeeps and high ranking officers' cars were running in procession. We passed swiftly over the deserted highway of the middle of the night. Every time someone would ask, "Where are we now?" I would look through the little front

window and tell them. Meanwhile, Oie, sitting next to me, fell into a drowse and snored loudly. I called Major Walsh's attention to it. Anyone might ask, "How can a man doze off to sleep on the way to his own execution? Impossible." But it was an actual fact. And it became the topic of talk among the officers later.

After a while he opened his eyes.

"Just now," I said, "you have been snoring."

"To die is like returning home, isn't it?" he said, as if the whole affair were nothing strange. And he murmured over and over again, "Thanks to Amida Buddha! Thanks to Amida Buddha!"

The car took the road through the outer garden of the Meiji Shrine and, crossing Aoyama Graveyard and passing the rear gate of the former Azabu Regiment, at last stopped in front of the rifle range of the cavalry regiment of the U.S. Army.

Major Walsh and I got out first, and Mr. Oie followed. At the entrance to the rifle range, I shook his hand firmly and bade him farewell.

For the moment I was standing alone in the open air. The stars in the sky were glittering beautifully and the night wind was cool.

Suddenly I heard the shots of rifles. Not three minutes had passed since I had seen him off.

"Come, we'd better hurry!" Major Walsh opened the door of the car.

The wide rifle range was illuminated by floodlights as bright as daylight, and many officers, standing in a row, were gazing at something in front of them.

I followed Major Walsh with hurried steps down the center path, halting about ten meters from a man standing erect

covered with a black hood. At once I began to read the Sutra.

Though I could not see the face on account of the hood, he was unmistakably Colonel Oie. He was standing erect and wearing a white shirt without a coat. On the spot over his heart there were two red stains of fresh blood, clearly visible in the strong electric light. While several American soldiers were unbinding it from the post, the Colonel's body, drawing a last deep breath into its swollen chest, slumped suddenly forward on its knees. The soldiers carried it carefully in their arms and laid it in a casket waiting close by—a casket so large that it held the body easily just as it lay.

The soldiers did not put the lid on until I had finished the reading of the Holy Scriptures and appeared to be praying quietly for the repose of his soul. Having read the Amida Sutra in haste, I bowed respectfully with my palms together, and then left.

It was at 1:30 A.M., October 23rd, that I heard the shots ending the Colonel's life. When our car re-entered the gate of Sugamo, it was already some minutes past two. I went into the Officers' Club, and there many officers wanted to shake hands. They thanked me for my trouble, and at the same time praised the last bearing of Colonel Oie.

That old soldier, Colonel Oie, was a sturdy man of action, but he also possessed considerable literary ability and showed it in the letters and notes which he wrote assiduously while in prison.

And finally, having attained a firm faith in Buddha, he passed away in peace of mind, giving no heed to either life or death.

Later, I read to both the A Class criminals and their fam-

ilies his last letters, and it seemed to me that his composed and clear state of mind impressed their hearts.

The last writing of ex-Colonel Oie:

Respectfully I write:

At one o'clock on the night of October 22, I end this life under the punishment of death by shooting. It is really a significant day for me. To reflect now, I realize that I have always been causing you trouble, while at the same time I have always been unable to return any words of thanks.

My happy return to the holy land of Amida—for this too I must be grateful to the favor of Buddha. "To give thanks for Buddha's favor"—only this I must endeavor to do till my end.

I am afraid my parents, wife, children, brothers and sisters will mourn my death especially. But I beg them not to lament. It is all due to karma that I die today—it is my fate. After I have arrived at the holy land, I will return here again by all means and engage in the great work of saving unawakened people.

After I lost my father in childhood, my mother took his place and my three elder brothers watched over me particularly. After my marriage, my wife's father gave me a parent's love, and her mother also was fond of me, and her brothers and sisters were devoted to me as they could have been to a real brother. Needless to say, I have also been loved and cherished by my wife and children. Thus I have lived a perfectly happy life. Only I am ashamed that I have

rendered the Emperor too meager service, and that I have been unable to display the true love which I felt for my parents, wife, children, brothers and sisters.

I am ashamed that, knowing that love is everything in life, I have been unable to show it. But Amida Buddha mercifully saves even this worthless fellow full of earthly lust. This man who, even in the situation he faces today, is scarcely able to give himself up to sincere religious meditation. Bathing me in the light of salvation, he takes me to His holy land. How merciful He is!

What else should we be thankful for, if not for this?

My elder brothers! love one another. My nieces and nephews! love one another.

My young brothers and sisters! Love one another. My wife and children! love one another with the mother as the center. My friends! love one another.

Love one another!—these are my last words. We have to economize on food and clothing, but there is no need to economize on affection and love.

Do not utter harsh words. Do not speak ill of others. Do not try others. Nothing can make life more beautiful or give it more meaning than this one word, love.

I feel that if you can fully understand this love—that is, the Mercy of Buddha—my death today will not have been in vain.

Now it is five o'clock in the evening. I still have seven hours before my departure for the holy land.

Seiichi! Take care of everything after I am gone! You were a First Lieutenant in the Army, were you not? Only twenty-six years old and already First Lieutenant—you are a good boy.

Reijin! I hope you will become the manager of the bank.

No matter how the world may change, faithfulness to one's superiors will be a cardinal virtue.

Teruko! Serve your husband devotedly. The path of a true woman, after all, is to do everything faithfully. It will bear fruit in the long run.

When I think of how you three must feel, I am of course overwhelmed with grief. But do not make yourselves miserable. With your brother Seiichi as leader, serve your mother faithfully and love one another.

"Loving one another" means exchanging words of love. It is not enough merely to cherish love in the heart. You must utter it in words. From today on, don't speak any harsh words, at least among brothers and sisters. If you are tempted to do so, sit before the family altar and ask this father's advice.

As Teruko is a girl, please be gentle to her! Please speak gentle words to her for my sake.

As Takako is a young girl who has lost her father's love, please do not forget to love her yourselves. Do not merely think your love, but utter it in words.

Seiichi! Do not hesitate to speak your love when you feel it.

Takako and Teruko, you may speak freely to your elder brother. Seiichi, be gentle to them for my sake.

Reijin! As the practical businessman of the family, you may speak frankly to your elder brother and ask him for anything. I permit it. Teruko! You may be naughty to brother Seiichi, brother Reijin, or sister Ryuko. I permit it. For even if you should be naughty as my child, Buddha will save you.

I want to remain close to the most unhappy child. The most unhappy child! I shall stay with you. Unfortunate

children, I am always with you. When I think that these are my last words, I feel that I love you more than ever.

Fumiko! Be filial to our old mother as ever. And love your younger brother and sister. I am grateful for your efforts down to today. Help my brother at Mikekado in my stead. I fear you will have to endure much suffering from now on. I feel very sorry for you. You have brought up three children admirably. Well done! You have really done well. I am sure my father thanks you from his tomb. Until today, I have been in Tokyo and in the Philippines, but from today on I shall be with you forever. The thought of it makes me glad.

During the fighting in the mountains, whenever my subordinates were dying either in action or of illness, I ordered them to shout, "Banzai for the Emperor!" In my battle today, I am also going to die happily praising the Emperor's name. I may look like a mere prisoner now. But I am a Colonel of the Army. (When you visited me I might seem miserable with handcuffs on, and flabby—life in the cell, with the good meals, has been too much for me.) I will shout "Banzai for the Emperor!" in so loud a voice that it will reach his palace. I have not yet been discharged from my service. It is certain that I am still a son of the Emperor.

It is six o'clock now. I have still six hours. I want to continue writing during these hours.

A train is whistling outside somewhere.

In my Philippine days, I was not so sensitive to such sounds. Now, as if I am loath to leave this world, they strike my ears. Though doomed to execution, I have not shed a single tear. My audacity is really limitless. I am very pleased that when I was told I must die I did not turn pale. The span of human life is usually fifty years. Five years have passed



since I was at that age. If I remember correctly, my father died at fifty-three; so I have outlived him only two years. But when I think of my subordinates who died young, I cannot possibly wish for more. These subordinates are now the foundation of new Japan, and now I am going to join them. To be compelled to go on living fifty years would be horrible. I long for the holy land of Buddha. I think constantly of the land of eternal life.

Nevertheless, I have not given up life here yet—probably because I am an ordinary man. But at the same time I realize that, even if I lived on, I should only trouble my children. So I have a mind to go first to the holy land to guide them. I feel also as though I were dreaming. I feel as if this execution were none of my concern. I wonder if it isn't a play on the stage. But even if it is a dream, at least it is certain that I am saved by Buddha.

Brother! Will you please speak gently to my sons and daughters? It might be almost impossible for you to grant any other request of mine than this. But, as I have heard that present society is short not only of foodstuffs for material meals but also of spiritual food, will you please help them in these matters as much as you can? I am afraid that Seiichi, Reijin, or Teruko may do wrong. In such a case, please forgive them for my sake. And would you please encourage them with praise sometimes? For if there is none to praise them they will be disappointed. There are too many people in the world who speak ill of others. Of this fact also, I have become aware only since the end of the war. Formerly, I believed that to criticize others was to show them the truest kindness. But now I believe that to encourage with praise is the true kindness. So please praise them for me.

I well understand the efforts of brother Mitsugu. I can

also understand brother Seijiro's state of mind. So please love each other. I hope you will embrace each other and continue on the way to Paradise. Remember, each of you has only one brother. I think that if you can regain the feelings we had in childhood, you will be able to keep on good terms with each other. . . .

It must already be seven o'clock. I still have five hours. I've just happened to recall the last writing of Submarine-Captain Sakuma.

Even if Lieutenant A or Lieutenant B pretends to show you kindness, you must never accept it. Lieutenant A was sentenced to death by me in the mountains for the following four reasons:

1. That he retreated from Parupinon without my approval.
2. That at the time of the retreat he left one squad of machine-gunners behind so that they were annihilated.
3. That he retreated leaving his orderly behind.
4. That he was sent out twice as a patrol and twice made false reports.

Lieutenant B once hurt a man of another unit on the ship and was punished by me. After that he served me faithfully and I also loved him. But after all, he is a playboy from the redlight district of Kumamoto. A playboy means a rowdy. As his actions are unpredictable and he can't be counted on, you should avoid his company.

Most of my subordinates went to the Parawan Islands and died in action there. I want you to go and see the widow of Lieutenant Doki. He was a good man. Captain Oda died in the fighting round Dumaguete City. He was a good man

too. Most of the others died in action as well. I feel sorry for them and wish they were living today. It's a dream—just a bad dream.

The time is passing very fast. It must be nearly eight o'clock now.

Upon receiving the news of my death, you will weep and lament. But don't do this. Death is a fate ordained by Heaven. Instead of weeping, you had better take care of yourselves. I hope all will go well with you after I am gone.

Next, it must have cost you a great deal of money to come clear up here to visit me. But I shall cost you nothing further. Be at ease in your minds about me. It is my greatest hope that you will live happily and honorably. It's probably unnecessary to write such a thing now, but I'm telling you because it is my greatest hope. Although I have written many letters, probably they have not reached you. They may do so later.

Endure everything. Buddha refers to this endurance many times in his sutras. He even says that endurance is the first of moralities. The life of man can be defined as endurance. I cannot help feeling that I have been lacking in endurance. Buddha explained endurance in various of its aspects. The more important the post you hold, the more you should endure.

As for my wife, Fumiko, happiness may not visit her again throughout her life. So please be kind to her. But as for Seiichi, Reijin, and Teruko, they still have youth, and happiness will come. Only I am sorry for all of you, in that I have caused you so much misery. But at the same time I believe I have done everything I could for you. So please pardon me.

The harmonious cooperation of Seiichi, Reijin, Takako,

and Teruko, with their mother as the center—this is the only way to greet the coming spring.

I feel as if I were keeping vigil for the death of some other person. The American guard speaks to me kindly, and at times I talk with him in my broken English. He asked me just now, "Aren't you sleepy?" To which I answered smilingly, "I'm not going to sleep tonight."

Tonight I can smoke as much as I want. I had a delicious dinner too. I have finished my last supper. I am ready to go to the execution ground. I feel it will be easy. When I was given the sentence of death today, I really wanted to smile. It is true. I am surprised that when one has crossed the deathline one can feel like this.

To me this life has become tiresome. I do not want to live by any means. And so I can't help feeling happy. I want to die with a smile. Though usually I weep easily, tonight I have not shed a tear. I think of singing but do not actually sing, and I imagine my coming journey of death but feel no unrest at all.

I think this is owing to my religious faith. I have entrusted myself to God. How many times have I had to thank God in the past? I think that my returning to Japan this time is also entirely owing to the mercy of Buddha.

When Fumiko said to me, "I feel as if there were no God or Buddha," I sympathized with her partly. But to reflect quietly this too is the mercy of Buddha. Buddha will surely lead us to happiness!

Fumiko! Believe in Buddha. I shall wait for you there, cleaning half of my seat for you.

Colonel Oie left with me seven sheets of his last writings,

which he had brushed elaborately on Japanese letter-paper between nine and ten o'clock that night.

### LAST POEMS

Oh, how sad and lonesome a stranger in a strange land is!

With whom shall I speak about my daily life?

To whom shall I tell my merits on the battlefield?

The vicissitudes of life are just like floating clouds!

"Nanpachi" was a man and died for the cause of righteousness.

"Teiba" showed us love's highest extreme by even loving the enemy.

There is one road of Truth infallible for all ages and in all countries:

How beautiful faithfulness is! How eternal faithfulness is!

I'll sing the melody of truth. I'll march on the road of truth.

Praying to Buddha, I know the light of His benevolence is

everywhere.

Everything in nature is vain, and there exists no "I" and

no "mine".

There is no one who hurts and no one who is hurt.

Everything covered by His light is as great as the infinite void.

My heart is always loitering outside this world;

The limitless glory is shining before my eyes.

Meditating and praying with my whole soul, I believe in

only this truth:

There is no one who can hurt me above or under the sky.

I'll sing the melody of truth, I'll march on the road of truth.

When you yearn for me, come on the road of faithfulness,

For I am always living in faithfulness.

I have done nothing such as a father could boast of to his children,

But now I start on the road to Truth.

May our children bloom forever,

Being praised as cherry blossoms or plum flowers!

I want my last poems to be printed in due time by my eldest

son, Seiichi, and to be presented to my friends and acquaintances. You may do this instead of holding a funeral. A formal funeral is unnecessary; I've heard that Saint Shinran said so too. Anyway, this is not a suitable time for my funeral. Your holding a funeral for me will not insure my safe passage to Paradise. I shall be living with you forever.

The night goes on rapidly. It is getting on toward eleven. Cleaning myself completely, I am going to the side of Buddha.

I feel that Buddha is waiting for me. I remember reading about the dying moments of Saint Shinran in the drama, "A Priest and His Disciples." And I recall what my intimate friend, Mr. Reichi Shinoda, said when he was dying in the arms of his father. "I cannot walk, for too many Buddhas are in my way." By this I suppose he meant that he was being welcomed by crowds of Buddhas.

Hanayama Sensei will be here soon and I must be ready to go down with him to the altar-room.

Then, shouting "Banzai for the Emperor!", I shall go to sleep for a while. Then I shall become a Buddha. "Homage to Amida Buddha, homage to Amida Buddha, homage to Amida Buddha."

## 11.

### *Glorifying Christ*

#### NOVEMBER 5TH (FRIDAY)

At 8:30 A.M. another pronouncement of execution was held in a room at the end of the first floor of the detached building. Those who received it were two men: ex-Captain

Masao Nishizawa (former commanding officer of Yokohama P.O.W. Camp) and ex-Sergeant Tadao Shibano (formerly attached to Naoetsu P.O.W. Camp).

From nine-thirty I visited their single cells on the second floor. Both of them were Christians. Especially Nishizawa, who had been brought up so by his parents, who had served for a long time with the Ohmi Brotherhood, at Ohmi Yawatemachi. (The Ohmi Brotherhood's work is partly supported by the manufacture of the well-known medicine, *Mentholum*.) He had always been a Christian. Since entering Sugamo he had devoted himself all the more to his religion. I had done everything I could to help him deepen his belief by sending him Christian books, and had also often met his parents and wife so that they could keep in touch with him.

Shibano was a bright and cheerful youth. Although his family belonged to the Jodo sect of Buddhism, he had been drawn to Christianity by the charm of the hymns since he came to Sugamo and shared Nishizawa's cell.

I have never forced my way of belief on any one. I have been bosom friends with Christians and Shintoists. There are many different ways of approaching the Divine, such as Christianity and Buddhism, each having its appeal according to a man's temperament. Whichever way is adaptable to *that* is right for him. For the goal of all these ways is the same summit.

After supper I visited their cells again. Shibano was fast asleep, while Nishizawa was singing a hymn in a loud voice. I cut their hair and fingernails and put them in two envelopes, each with the man's name on it.

On this occasion I took two hymnbooks with me to discuss with the men the hymns to be sung before their start for the place of execution. Nishizawa was especially pleased.

"Sir, will you please stay here as long as possible?" he asked. And Shibano said, "Please cut my hair as short as possible." He also said, "Sir, after all, I am not quite content with Christianity." But to this I replied: "As it is no use saying such a thing at this late moment, you had better go on as you are."

At 11:15 P.M., I visited their cells for the third time to receive their last writings. As Shibano was fast asleep this time too, I hallooed to him from outside the iron screen and told him that the time of execution was nearly at hand.

In the altar-room downstairs, I had closed the door of the Buddhist altar and set the Cross of Christ in front of it. Having lit a candle on each side, I waited for their coming.

Accompanied by four American guards, the two men soon appeared and prayed to God quietly before the Cross and sang together Nos. 490, 412, and 441 from the hymnal. Then Major Walsh prayed aloud in English. After the "Kimigayo" had been sung, led by Nishizawa and Shibano alternately, and *banzais* "for the country of God, Japan" and "for our motherland" had been given three times respectively, they drank the wine, ate a little chocolate, and exchanged the farewell cup of water.

Then we shook hands firmly.

"Sir, I am really grateful to you."

"Farewell! Give my love to all."

Leaving these words floating behind them, they marched to the execution-place through drizzling rain, singing a hymn softly.

The execution was held at zero thirty, November 6th.

When I stopped in at the Officers' Club, many of the officers there praised the way they had met their end.



The last letter of Nishizawa:

To dear Masahiro and dear Reiko—

Tomorrow morning your father will return to the place where the Heavenly Father is. I am afraid that you cannot understand fully for the present what I mean. When you grow up and know about me, you may be sad at times. But I believe you will surely understand my heart and become strong, if you are taught about God, our Heavenly Father.

Though from tomorrow the body of your father will no longer be in this world, he will always be by your side together with God, our Heavenly Father, and will watch over you so that you may become useful to God and society.

As you are too young now, I have written to your mother what I want to say to you. What I want you to do now is to listen to and follow your mother's words at all times. As your father must return so early to the Heavenly Father's land, your mother must bear the whole burden of bringing you up. What suffering this will mean to her! From today on, your mother will have a hard time, and her only joy will be looking forward to the time when you will be of age. She will bring you up in accordance with the words of God, the Heavenly Father, and the wishes of this earthly father. What I want to say to you above all is that you must take care of your mother.

God has taught from ancient times that those who do not serve their father and mother faithfully are not men and will be punished severely. But as you no longer have a father in this world, you must love and serve your mother with double loyalty. Besides, as you grow up you will receive much kindness from your grandfather and grandmother, and

your uncles and aunts. You must not forget that because you lost your father in childhood all your relatives will do all they can to help you to grow up happily.

Next, Masahiro and Reiko must love each other, I am sure Masahiro will love Reiko. And Reiko, you get along very well with brother Masahiro, don't you? Masahiro, remember you told me the other day, "Reiko is very lovely. She stays in our home." I believe that, blessed with the mercy of God, you will surely grow up friendly, strong, and honest, with beautiful minds, so that you will please your mother, grandfather, grandmother, uncles, and aunts. Do not forget that when your mother and all the others are pleased, not only God will be pleased but also I, even though invisible to you, will rejoice at your side.

Lastly, one more thing I want to say to you is that you must always study the words of God well. Those words will be taught you by your mother and other people. Then, you will be able to see a glorious Japan, which though I want to see it I cannot behold.

Well, time is pressing, and I must stop writing now. But I ask you once more never to forget that I shall always be praying and longing in Heaven that both Masahiro and Reiko will love each other, be obedient to your mother, grandfather, grandmother, uncles and aunts, and become a just, strong, good man and woman for the sake of God and society. Then, when you pray with your mother morning and evening, you will be able not only to hear the words of God but also to see your father.

Praying to God the Father, in Heaven, that you may grow up blessed by the mercy and protection of Jesus Christ, the redeemer of human sins—Amen.

*ABOUT 4 O'CLOCK, NOVEMBER 5,*

The last poem of Tadao Shibano:

With mind clearer than the sky of a bright autumn day,  
I am marching alone on my way.

To Hanayama Sensei:

I thank you very much for the kindness you have shown me for so long a time. I pray for your health and happiness. At the same time, since Japan in this period of reconstruction needs spiritual teaching above all else, I pray earnestly that you will endeavor to rebuild a glorious Japan with your religion.

*11:30 A. M., NOVEMBER 5,*

Tadao Shibano

The last letter of Tadao Shibano:

*FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH. FINE*

At seven o'clock this morning I finished breakfast as usual and started morning prayers with Mr. Nishizawa, with whom I am living in the same cell. We had ended the prayers and hymns and were about to read the Holy Bible together, when we received the last summons. Yes, it was for us—who are on very friendly and intimate terms, having attained the same faith and shared our joys and sorrows together for half a year.

We were immediately transferred to single cells in the other block. Having received the order of execution and returned quietly to my cell just now, I am writing this letter. The time of execution is 00:30, November 6th.

What comes across my mind now is only the faces of Mother, Yoshiei, Masako and Hideo. My heart is filled with the feelings of longing, gratitude and regret. I cannot possibly express these feelings either by pen or word of mouth. I can only be grateful for your favor and think it too much for me. There is nothing but thankfulness in my mind. I think Mother, Yoshiei, Masako and Hideo will understand well my feeling. For all our hearts are one and the same, and all our feelings are one and the same.

Mother! The time has come at last when I start merrily on a new journey. Please never moan and lament. Having been saved by religious belief, my mind, full of hope and joy, is as clear as the bright autumn day. As I will shout "Banzai" for our fatherland and give up my life in a manly way like a Japanese, please do not worry about me.

Looking back over my life of nearly thirty years, I realize I have given you much trouble and worry, Mother. When I think of your suffering, my eyes are filled with tears of gratitude. I am really sorry that I have done nothing to return your favor. But please forgive me and say only that I was an unlucky child. From the other world I will protect all our family, and so repay an infinitesimal fraction of your kindness. Mother! Please never moan and lament. Never be discouraged. I, Tadao, will always be protecting you by your side. From now on, Yoshiei will be the backbone of the family. And as Yoshiei has a really firm character, please live long and happily, setting your hopes on him.

Next, religious belief is very important. I hope this opportunity will lead you to believe in the truth of Buddha. I am sure you will attain contentment and hope through it. You have already passed the ordinary span of life, fifty years. When you hear about my departure and think of your own short remaining life, you will become sad. When I consider this, I think you will become very happy when

you embrace Buddhism and live a strong, right, and bright life blessed by the strength and mercy of Buddha. Mother, please live with a firm belief in Buddha.

I have been embracing Christianity till today. But when one has climbed up the mountain of religious belief, one finds that the top is only one. So after my death I shall be converted to the Jodo sect to which our forefathers belonged. If you hold a service, do it in the style of the Jodo sect.

But I don't think a funeral is necessary—especially at this time. I would like to decline it. If four members of the family, including Mother, offer prayers for me it will be sufficient. And if you enter the gate of Buddha and live by religious belief, I will be most glad and happy.

I am praying from the depth of my heart that you will begin a religious life as soon as possible so that you may live strongly, justly, purely and brightly.

Though I have many things to write to you, I have no more time. So I must say goodbye now. From now on, we shall speak together through the intercourse of our hearts.

Take good care of yourself, and hoping you will live a long life,

Goodbye.

At 2:00 P.M., November 5,

From Tadao

To dear Mother

## CHAPTER IV

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### LIFE IN SUGAMO EXACTLY AS I SAW IT

**WHEN** we Japanese hear the word Sugamo, we have a gloomy feeling. This is probably because the name is associated with the fresh memory of this miserable and unfortunate war. We think of Sugamo as being a stage on which a harsh drama of life and death is being played, with the gallows on one side and hard labor on the other.

But the real Sugamo is not such a dark and gloomy hotel. On the contrary, compared with ordinary prisons in Japan, especially with certain ones of the post-war period, it is an extraordinarily bright place.

It seems conditions in some of our P.O.W. camps in Japan were scarcely ideal, as was brought out very clearly at the Yokohama Trials.

Compared with them, Sugamo can rightly be called a window of heaven.

#### *Cleanliness*

The first and most noticeable characteristic of Sugamo life is its cleanliness. Inside the barbed-wire fences of Sugamo,

there are not only spacious vegetable gardens and a football field, but also seasonal flowers such as tulips, daffodils, daisies, sunplants, roses, and pampas-grass.

Everything is well-kept, and every nook and cranny is utilized. Sugamo is so clean that it would be no exaggeration to say that not one bit of trash can be found inside the iron fence. There is no dust in its corridors or on its window-sills and toilets. The brass door-knobs shine like gold. The whole place gives one an amazingly clean impression.

When I went there for the first time three years ago, I was disgusted by the utter disorder and uncleanness of the burned-out area in its neighborhood. But the strenuous efficiency of the American authorities has changed all that. As for the Buddhist chapel in the prison itself, its new wallpaper, ceiling, and curtains, and its freshly polished floor give it quite a different solemnity.

This reminds me of an incident. About five o'clock one morning last summer, after seeing off a group of condemned prisoners, the Catholic Chaplain (Lieutenant Ryan) and I were standing outdoors for a while resting. Lieutenant Ryan tore the paper from the butt of the cigarette he had been smoking, dumped the tobacco, and put the wisp of paper that remained, in his pocket.

I watched him wonderingly, thinking that since the Japanese employees used to pick up cigarette-butts very often in those days, he had done it to put a stop to such habits. As if aware of my thought he said lightly, "The tobacco itself will burn out, but the paper will become trash and trouble the G.I.'s." Then I realized that he didn't want to scatter trash on the ground.

It is the accumulation of such delicate moralities that has made Sugamo so clean.

*The Bright Life*

Whenever I talk with inmates of Japanese prisons, I generally am aware of an unpleasant aura, a disgusting smell. But there is no such smell in Sugamo. The residents there bathe at least twice a week and change their clothes about once a week. Their blankets and comforters are also changed often. DDT is dusted all about, so that there is not a flea, a louse, a mosquito, or a fly inside the prison. Though it seems that the Japanese Government is making strenuous efforts to improve the administration of its own prisons, it has far to go before it reaches anything like the standard of Sugamo.

Sugamo has many baseball teams and sometimes holds inter-Block matches. Basketball is also played. On Saturdays movies are shown. A musical band has been formed. Once on Christmas Day it visited around the cells of the A-Class criminals and the condemned prisoners and played for their consolation. As visiting among the prisoners in the single cells is permitted, games of *go* [Japanese checkers] and *shogi* [Japanese chess] are all the rage. Even the condemned prisoners are allowed to take exercise, though with handcuffs.

Compared with the present quality of Japanese food, the meals of the prisoners are extremely good.

As for clothing, they wash and wear the castoff garb of the American G.I.'s, which are pure wool. The only bad part of it cannot be helped: these clothes have big "P's" stamped over them here and there.

The prisoners sentenced to hard labor are classified according to their skills into many groups, such as gardeners, farmers, and clogmakers. But if anyone is thinking of the clanking chains of the days before the French Revolution, he is utterly mistaken.



Once a condemned prisoner said to me earnestly, "Sir, I know a lot about prison administration since I was commanding officer of a P.O.W. camp. And I am often made to reflect upon our past by seeing American ways." The difference he detected may have been partly due to gaps in national wealth, culture, and customs. But there is a vast contrast between their standards and ours.

Once, just before mounting the gallows, a condemned prisoner took off the clogs he was wearing and put on a pair of shoes. (By the way, now almost all the prisoners in Sugamo, officers and privates, wear clogs made there.) As he was in handcuffs, the G.I. accompanying him took the trouble to tighten the laces of one shoe as the prisoner sat in a chair. As I was watching this scene, an officer stepped forward and tied the laces of the other shoe. Several G.I.'s were present, but the officer didn't seem to care.

On another occasion, I saw an officer clip the hair of the condemned prisoners himself.

These may seem trifles, but I was filled with admiration both for their indifference to rank and for their strong sense of responsibility, which made them see through to a successful end *themselves* any duty given them. I realize now that such things formed the invisible basis for the brightness and order of this Sugamo life.

The prisoners are permitted six different newspapers: the "Asahi," the "Mainichi," the "Yomiuri," the "Nippon Keizai," the "Tokyo," and the "Nippon Times." And of course they enjoy complete religious freedom, each person's attitude toward religion being fully respected, and there being no coercion or oppression in such matters.

Their only pain is the suffering of confinement and separation from their families. But, as you know, interviews with

the latter are permitted once a month; and as for letters, except in special cases they are permitted to write once a week.

### *The Sugamo Weekly News*

Another matter which interests me is the weekly newspaper the prisoners publish with former newspapermen on its staff. In prisons in Japan, as in the United States, "prisoners'" newspapers are often published under the guidance of the prison administration. But the Sugamo newspaper, though its format is only four small mimeographed pages, in variety of content and liveliness of presentation is very different from any other prison paper I have seen. To take, for instance, the issue of June 19<sup>th</sup>, which chances to lie at my hand. On its front page, in the editorial column, is an article entitled, "The Communist Party—Let it Reflect on Itself." It begins:

"Unless the Communist Party looks into its conscience and promptly dissolves, it will necessarily lose the sympathy of the general public."

Following this article comes an essay with the title, "East and West: Can't the Twain Ever Meet?"

What pleases me is both the lightness of the paper's style and its sincerity. A brief item on "Face and Hand" begins: "The face is the stage on which our feelings are expressed."

As its readers consist of specialists in various fields, there is also an account of a symposium of physicians, a glimpse of the poet circle in Sugamo, and a miscellany of personal items. The writer of the account of the medical symposium

facetiously refers to himself as "Reporter 'M,' of our corporation."

Freedom of speech is as necessary to man's sustenance as freedom to breathe. And reading the "Sugamo Weekly" I can understand how this small mimeographed paper consoles the prisoners in their abnormal life and supplies them with needed mental nourishment.

Though Sugamo is a place where life and death pulsate austere, yet at the same time it must not be forgotten that it is also a training-ground not without light and blessedness.

The editorial of August 7th elaborates on the theme of patriotism. It closes with a noteworthy declaration of pacifism, distilled from the writer's experience as a war criminal. As evidence that even war criminals have already attained such self-awareness, I give the editorial in full just as written.

### *Patriotism*

It seems that the word "patriotism" has become obsolete in Japan since the surrender. This fact is one of the results of the prevailing democracy and individualism—though to put the matter that way is perhaps an over-simplification. Let us say, rather, that it shows how our people misinterpret democracy and individualism, and make the mistake of thinking that patriotism can only coexist with nationalism and totalitarianism. Who can assert that democratic countries such as Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union are lacking in patriotism? We Japanese, who arrogantly considered patriotism our monopoly and despised what we thought the inferior article of the Anglo-Americans, learned through sad experience how thorough-going and ardent their

patriotism was. Moreover, we discovered how firm and solid patriotism based upon individualism could be. On the other hand, we have seen how silent Japan's super-patriots have become since their country was defeated—quite as though they had lost the object of their passionate love.

But true patriotism is especially needed when the nation is confronted with hardships and difficulties. Present-day Japan needs it most urgently. Yet no one can be found advocating it, because everyone is afraid that if he does speak up he will be taken for a reactionary. Japan, having purged herself of nationalism at the time of the surrender, now goes a step farther and drives out patriotism. This is a grave error involving, as it does, the very fate of our mother-country. Our real reconstruction should be undertaken on the foundation of a patriotism which is itself based upon democracy.

The idea that we cannot show our patriotism without waving a sword is absurd and should be cast aside at once.

We earnestly hope our people will mend their ways and not forget their love of country in the difficult situation which confronts us.

## CHAPTER V

### FINALE OF THE TOKYO TRIAL

**AT LAST** the day of judgment was approaching for the twenty-five accused wartime leaders. Since the final hearing in April, the judges representing the eleven countries constituting the International Military Tribunal for the Far East had been busy drafting the summation and judgment.

The Tribunal re-opened on November 4th, and there began at last the reading of the historic judgment.

It seemed to me that the general public, which had been quite indifferent to the Trial, began to understand its extreme significance and to take an interest in what was going on at Ichigaya and Sugamo. Realizing that matters were approaching a crisis, I made up my mind quietly to do my best to prepare the twenty-five accused for their probable condemnation.

Meanwhile I had been praying for the opportunity to preach to them directly. This desire had become a passionate longing by mid-summer.

While waiting for this chance, I contributed two brief articles to the prison newspaper previously mentioned. The first appeared on June 19th. Under the heading "Random Thoughts," I said:

"In studying human life we find that those who end their days in what are known as favorable circumstances do not

always 'die happy.' On the other hand, we can recall not a few cases of men who, fated to die in adverse circumstances, have utilized their misfortunes to comprehend the true significance of human life, and were thus far happier than the prosperous men mentioned. This life is limited, but the future is limitless. What is really to be desired is the power to make this limited present life the preparation for the unlimited life to come."

In the issue of August 7th, I wrote on the eternity of life in the land of Buddha, and explained the reason why the sorrow inherent in an ephemeral human being can be eased at last in the future world.

But the opportunity to preach came soon.

I was allowed to hold a special service for these wartime leaders from 1:00 to 2:45 P.M., on Friday, August 7th. This was the first time I had ever delivered a sermon exclusively for the twenty-five. As I looked around the audience, I noticed Doihara, Hata, Hirota, Kaya, Kido, Matsui, Oshima, Sato, Shigemitsu, Shimada, Tojo, Kimura, and a few others.

After the reading of the Holy Scriptures and the worship before the altar, I asked them to stand and read "Passages from Three Faiths." Then I preached. I explained the relation between Buddha, Law, and Truth. I described how certain condemned prisoners had lived before their execution, and I read the Resolution made by some men who had been released from Sugamo and were now working sustained by the religious faith gained there: "New Japan must be built by those who have dwelt in Sugamo." And I gave the example of young Fukuhara's daily life in his single cell: "I have been made alive today also! I am really grateful. Thanks to Amida Buddha."

After the sermon, as I could not attach the faces to the

names in all cases, I approached the benches and asked them to give me their names. Mr. Kenryo Sato, who evidently considered himself my closest acquaintance among them, introduced them one by one. Then I handed to them various religious magazines, such as "World Buddhism," "Buddhist Culture," and "Faith."

At that moment ex-General Tojo spoke up. "I'd like to have 'Shinran' by Eiji Yoshikawa sent to me, if possible." And Mr. Sato wanted to have a commentary on *Kyogyo Shinsho*.

I answered that I'd be glad to send them these books, and immediately after the meeting I sent, through the office, "Under the Shade of a Tree" (by Joen Ashikaga) to Mr. Tojo, and "Praise of *Shoshinge*" (by Akegawasu) to Mr. Sato, as temporary substitutes for the wanted volumes.

Later I was able to send "Shinran" to Mr. Tojo. Judging from internal evidence when it was returned, this book must have been read by fifteen men besides Mr. Tojo. For on the title-page were the words, "After reading, return to Tojo," and the signatures of fifteen men, such as Itagaki, Kimura, Doihara, Hirota, and others. It is now kept as a souvenir by Tojo's family.

Until then I had been doubtful as to Mr. Tojo's attitude toward religion. But on that day I felt that I touched its core for the first time. I rejoiced to find that he was turning to a deep religious faith.

On September 9th, I sent twenty-one religious books to these men.\*

### *The Last Sermon*

I was given a second opportunity to deliver a special

\* For a list of these books see Appendix III.

sermon for the A Class men on Saturday, October 23rd, from 9:30 to 10:30 A.M.

As this was the day that Colonel Oie was executed, I was extremely tired. But feeling that the death-verdict for these others would be delivered very soon, I faced them in the chapel with the feeling that this would be my last chance to preach to them. I realized that by all means I must bring them face to face with the ultimate problem of life and death. If I remember correctly, Tojo, Hirota, Kaya, Hiranuma, Hata, Kido, Matsui, Shigemitsu, Kimura, and a few others attended—fourteen or fifteen men in all.

After reading "Passages from Three Faiths," I spoke, in effect, as follows:

**"The Fruit of the Surrender**

"I think today is probably my last chance to preach to you, though of course I hope that as many of you as possible will be acquitted. I think some of you will have to suffer the supreme penalty, while others will get a life sentence. I shall be able to see you in other circumstances after the verdict is given, but this is probably my last opportunity to see all of you together in the same hall.

"Man must necessarily die once in his life. Therefore it is certain that a little more than one hundred years from now not a soul alive on the earth today will still be living.

"Life and death visit us human beings every moment. Death does not come unexpectedly. As has been said: 'Today too somebody dies,' and 'We cannot expect to keep our lives even until tomorrow.'

"By the way—early this morning I sent off one of your subordinates. On the way to the execution-ground he fell asleep and snored loudly in the car—proof of the fact that



he was sustained by firm religious belief and had mastered its first principle: the ability to stand aloof from both life and death. When his execution by shooting was over, almost without exception the American officers present expressed to me their admiration for his dying attitude. As a Japanese myself, I too was much pleased at it."

Then I explained why Syaka-Muni \* renounced the world; that there were numerous ways leading to the spiritual awakening; how the teaching of salvation by faith was preached by Saint Honen and Saint Shinran and had been widely spread; that by this teaching of salvation by faith many emperors and their chief advisors and warriors of ancient times were saved; and what "the return to the eternal world" and "the resurrection and coming again to this world" mean. I continued:

"Among the nearly thirty men who have gone to the gallows up to today, there have been many in their forties and fifties. Because of their firm faith none of them feared death but rather welcomed it. And they all died honorable deaths. Their numerous invaluable writings they have left with me.

"Last June I spoke for three hours on some of these writings to four hundred students of the Engineering Department of Tokyo University, which as you know is now in the vicinity of Chiba City. Without exception, these students wept, they were so deeply impressed. Then having procured their own paper, they asked Chiba Prison to print some of these last writings and bound them into pamphlets, some of which they circulated among themselves, and the rest of which they turned over to me. 'The White Road,' copies of which I handed to you a few minutes ago, is that pamphlet.

\* See Glossary.

"As a result of this war our territory has been reduced by half. Our nation has lost millions of lives, and almost all the big cities all over the country have been bombed and have suffered unimaginable damage.

"From the material point of view these are irreparable losses. Then are there no counterbalancing gains? I think there are. One fruit of our suffering is these very writings and what they teach us. They are one rich fruit of this war. I believe that our failure during the eighty years since the beginning of the Meiji era [1868-1912] has been retrieved by the spiritual power of these men who are laying the foundation for the hopes of humankind for thousands of years to come.

"Here is found the method by which one can easily renounce a limited life and live in eternity. The way to live in eternity is never to despair even when doomed, but to go on living till the bitter end, utilizing the given hours to write what should be written and say what should be said, and finally to meet death in peace and calmness."

I could not compromise or dilute the truth at such a critical moment before their condemnation. But by implication I preached my thought and the truth as I believe it. And I was pleased to find that my hearers shared my feeling and listened earnestly to this last sermon. When it was over, I stepped forward and greeted them individually. Even Mr. Shigemitsu,\* whose artificial leg made standing difficult, arose and thanked me cordially.

"We are very grateful for your good sermon." As until that moment I wasn't sure whether I could give them the rest

\* As Foreign Minister, Shigemitsu signed the Documents of Surrender for Japan aboard the Battleship *Missouri*.

and contentment they needed, I was utterly relieved to see their expressions and hear their hearty words.

That day, when they were seated, I had handed to them one copy each of "Selfless Love," which the Selfless Garden Society had taken the trouble to edit especially for the sake of the war criminals and sent to me, and many religious magazines in varying number of copies,\* also, "A Guide to Seekers after the Truth," "The White Road," "The Holy Scriptures for Use in Worship," "The Freely Translated Holy Scriptures."

As the prisoners were leaving the room, all of them bowed in silence toward the altar.

As I shall describe later, this "Freely Translated Holy Scriptures" did much to promote Mr. Tojo's religious belief. He studied it with concentration while waiting for the Court's judgment, and wrote marginal comments all over it in pencil. On the day he was condemned, he handed it to his wife, Katsuko, but received another copy through me, which he cherished and read over and over again till the last day of his life. It was the same with Messrs. Doihara, Itagaki, Muto, and Kimura.

Thus at last November 4th arrived, and the reading of the historic judgment began.

On November 5th, I sent the prisoners many more magazines and books.\*

On November 12th I heard the final judgment over the radio, while sitting in the office of the Literary Department of Tokyo University.

Those sentenced to death by hanging were seven: Doihara, Hirota, Itagaki, Kimura, Matsui, Muto, and Tojo. With the exception of seven years for Shigemitsu and twenty years for

\* For titles of these see Appendix III.

Togo the other sixteen men were sentenced to life imprisonment. After all, none of them were acquitted.

The newspapers vied with one another in reporting the dramatic scene of judgment. Among such reports, I noticed a description of how the criminals bowed low before leaving the courtroom. In between the lines of such accounts was the hint that some foreigners had predicted that these criminals would utter wild words or faint away when they received their sentence. And some of the Japanese papers treated their bowing very casually, saying, "Bowing down has become their habit."

But I could not help thinking such views too superficial and feeling pity for their shallowness. As I had learned from watching these men closely that they were now saturated with deep religious faith, I was never afraid that they would utter violent words or faint in court, but was certain that their gratitude would appear naturally in some form. Their bowing was not a mere "habit" but originated in their deeper state of mind. I am sure that it was the manifestation of two mingled feelings—their acceptance of the judgment with full respect, and their gratefulness for the judges' trouble. For those who are eager to grasp eternal life, bowing is the natural posture of praying to Buddha.

On the morning of the day of his condemnation, ex-Premier Tojo wrote the following *tanka*.\* I would like to say that the feeling expressed in it explains exactly his mental attitude in bowing before leaving the court:

"Looking up, I hear reverently the voice of Buddha calling me from the limitless clean sky."

In compliance with the regulations of the Tribunal, General MacArthur announced that he would accept appeals for

\* See Glossary.

a review of the judgment till November 19th. Counsel of all the accused submitted their petitions to the General Headquarters in the course of that day.

The result of the review of the judgment was made public in the form of a message from General MacArthur by special announcement of G.H.Q. on the 24th.

Judgment was approved without any modification. Thus the death sentences for the seven criminals were confirmed, and Lieutenant General Walker, the Commanding General of the Eighth Army, was appointed as the responsible authority in charge of the execution.

General MacArthur's message ran as follows:

"No duty I have ever been called upon to perform in a long public service replete with many bitter, lonely and forlorn assignments and responsibilities is so utterly repugnant to me as that of reviewing the sentences of the Japanese War Criminal defendants adjudged by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. It is not my purpose, nor indeed would I have the transcendent wisdom which would be necessary, to assay the universal fundamentals involved in these epochal proceedings designed to formulate and codify standards of international morality by those charged with a nation's conduct. The problem is basically one which man has struggled to solve since the beginning of time and which may well wait complete solution till the end of time. In so far as my own immediate obligation and limited authority extend in this case, suffice it that under the principles and procedures prescribed in full detail by the Allied Powers concerned, I can find nothing of technical commission or omission in the incidents of the trial itself of sufficient im-

port to warrant my intervention in the judgments which have been rendered. No human decision is infallible but I can conceive of no judicial process where greater safeguard was made to evolve justice. It is inevitable that many will disagree with the verdict, even the learned justices who composed the Tribunal were not in complete unanimity. . . . If we cannot trust such processes and such men we can trust nothing. I therefore direct the Commanding General of the Eighth Army to execute the sentences as pronounced by the Tribunal.

“In doing so I pray that an Omnipotent Providence may use this tragic expiation as a symbol to summon all persons of good will to a realization of the utter futility of war, that most malignant scourge and greatest sin of mankind, and eventually to its renunciation by all nations. To this end on the day of execution I request the members of all congregations throughout Japan of whatever creed of faith in the privacy of their homes or at their altars of public worship to seek Divine help and guidance that the world keep the peace lest the human race perish.”

After the General's decision was announced, it was reported that American defense counsel were filing an appeal, in the cases of both Doihara and Hirota, to the Supreme Court of the United States, through Mr. Smith in Washington and Mr. Logan in New York. Application of the Habeas Corpus act was requested on the ground that in organizing the Tribunal General MacArthur had exceeded his powers and violated the Constitution of the United States.

On December 6th, the Supreme Court by a 5-4 vote decided to hold a hearing concerning the two prisoners mentioned above, and also five others—Kido, Oka, Shimada, and

Sato—who had been sentenced to life imprisonment, and Togo, who had been given twenty years.

The reception of the appeal by the Supreme Court automatically suspended any execution of sentence. General MacArthur stated to a U.P. reporter that nothing would be done until the Supreme Court had rendered its decision.

The United States Supreme Court opened its hearing at noon on the 16th, as expected; but on the 20th it rejected the appeals by a vote of 6-1, refusing to intervene in the judgment of the War Criminals Tribunal in Japan, on the ground that it had no jurisdiction over the Tribunal.

## CHAPTER VI

### MY TALKS WITH THE SEVEN MEN

*KENJI DOIHARA*

**SIXTY-THREE** years old. Born August 8, 1885 in Okayama Prefecture. Member of the 16th graduating class of the Military Academy and classmate of Seishiro Itagaki, Tetsuzan Nagata, Yasutsugu Okamura, Rensuke Isogai, Rikichi Ando, Shun Tada, Rinshiro Obata.

After finishing the Military Staff College in 1912, he was stationed in various posts in China, and after serving as a member of the General Staff, was a member of the Divisional Command of the 1st Division. As commander of the 30th Infantry was sent to General Headquarters, Kwantung Army.

Shortly after this the Manchurian Incident occurred and he became Mayor of Mukden, Chief of the Mukden Military Intelligence Corps, and Commander of the 9th Brigade.

He became the head of the Military Academy, and then successively held the posts of Inspector-General Army Air Force, Member of the Supreme Military Council, Commanding General of the Eastern Army, and Commanding General Seventh Army Command stationed in Singapore. Became Inspector-General of Military Education in which post he held until the termination of the war. He was



held to be the paragon of Military Intelligence, excelled in Chinese, threw his whole life into the study of Manchurian problems, and fathered and nurtured the Manchurian military Intelligence, where his name became a source of fear and awe to the Chinese.

[By the Tribunal he was considered the most unscrupulous and skilful politico-military agent in Manchuria and North China.—Translators' note.]

At present his family, residing at 385 Amanuma-Cho, Suginami Ward, Tokyo, consists of his wife Kayoko (62), his second son, Minoru (29) with the latter's wife, Chikako, and a granddaughter, Hiroko (2).

About the time he became an officer he also became a Buddhist. At first he identified himself with the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism, but in later years turned from the Shodo School to the Jodo and Ekigyo Schools of thinking. It was his reading of the "Trilogical Sutras of Jodo" that enabled him to make this change. Since the beginning of the Meiji Era his family had been Shintoists, and he often said that it was his own experiences which had effected his change over to Buddhism.

Our first meeting took place from 10:30 until 11:30 on the morning of November 19th.

He said:

"The moment that the sentence was pronounced, all my worries left me, and almost at once I began to feel better. And ever since then, I have been advising my family to forsake Shintoism and adopt some more definite and concrete religion, whatever it might be."

Then he went into detail about his state of mind after receiving the sentence. So I told him about the last mo-

ments of Colonel Oie, and then gave him a few steering-points by reading Oie-san's last statement to him.

It was on this day that I sent in fifteen books to the seven A Class war criminals. Up to that time my requests to send them books had met with refusal on the basis of the rigidly precautionary regulation stating that "not even a sheet of paper may be passed." Probably the relaxation of the rule was due to a letter from Tojo-san to the Commanding Officer reminding him that, under the International Statutes, religious books are permitted to prisoners.

The second meeting was for thirty minutes, from three o'clock in the afternoon of November 22nd (Monday). He came to me this time with a letter in his hand. It was addressed to his family, and he must have thought he could give it to me on the spot; but I told him about the censorship regulations, and had him read it off to me. It was quite long—close to twenty pages—and consisted of four parts.

Part One dealt with his past career and stated that he had been interested in China ever since his cadet days in the Army Preparatory School, and that, because he had maintained his interest ever since his first assignment in China as a lieutenant, he sincerely regretted the present turn of events. But if, he added, the Chinese people could receive some satisfaction from his execution, he would not begrudge them it. And if, as had been said, the present Trial was held for the purpose of bringing about eternal peace and friendship, he felt that that was a matter for boundless rejoicing and gratitude, and therefore he did not want anyone to sorrow over his execution.

Part Two dealt with his change of faith and ran roughly as follows:

"I entered the Zen sect in my youth. I read books on Zen

Buddhism and practised it. The trouble was that, though I could comprehend theoretically things like 'Matter and Mind are one,' 'The Great Mercy,' 'The Blankness of the Universe,' they did not materialize in my experience. Recently, I had occasion to reread the 'Life of Saint Shinran,' and then, after I had read the 'Trilogical Sutras of Jodo' and the 'Sutra of the True Faith' over and over again, I devoured the 'Lives of Saint Renyo and Saint Honen,' and eventually came to the firm conclusion that there was no other way for one like myself to be saved. I began to spend my spare time chanting my prayers, and the more I chanted them the more filled with rapture I became. But still I could not throw myself into the spirit of the thing thoroughly, perhaps because of the pull of this world. The moment, though, that I received my sentence the clouds cleared away and I was able to perform my chants with my whole self, my whole soul. And I am immersed in a feeling of religious ecstasy."

Part Three expressed his wish to have his new beliefs carried on by his family, and his hope that they would embrace the Jodo School of faith:

"I believe that my children are most suited to these teachings. I myself failed to get anything out of Zen Buddhism, and I feel that my children would fail too. The chanting of the 'Nembutsu' \* will ensure harmony in the home, and if they throw themselves into their work with a touch of the 'Nembutsu' spirit, they will display a sense of gratitude in their work and have a greater desire to perform their part in society. Back in the home again, this feeling will become the basis of all conduct. Real happiness will be the result. I hope the whole family will forsake the old faith and embrace this one and so attain happiness."

\* Prayer calling on the name of Amida-Buddha.

Part Four was concerned with current events and said in effect: "Today, under the name of democracy things not only false but actually criminal are being committed. This is indeed regrettable. The Far East is in a whirling eddy of conflicting ideas, and conditions there are terrible. Japan is about to be sucked into these waters. I pray from the bottom of my heart that a great personality will arise and save us from this danger. Though my body be executed, my soul shall be saved by Amida and be bathed in the light of religious ecstasy."

He had written "Long live the Emperor!" at the end, and had attached two *tanka*. One of these read:

Like the clear expanse  
Of the autumn heavens  
Is my soul today,  
And all these days.

On this occasion I explained the first three and the last chapters of the "Sutra of the Three Promises" to him, and promised to have his second son come to my home, where I would give him the outline of his message.

The third meeting was for about forty minutes on the morning of November 29th (Monday). This was the day on which the general public expected the executions would be carried out, and as if to verify the rumor, instead of the usual sergeants, two officers accompanied me. As I expected that the executions would certainly be carried out that night, I stayed over in Sugamo.

On this day Doihara-san said to me: "They aren't giving us newspapers any more, and I wonder if people are still speaking ill of me."

I answered, "No, considerable sympathy is being shown

you. And I believe public opinion will change even more after your death."

I explained the chief points of General MacArthur's statement, and he was grateful. He repeated what he had said before about his state of mind, smiling softly as he spoke. I could see that his faith was not wavering. He also said, "If I had not been given this death sentence, I would probably not have enjoyed this religious peace. I would have gone my way without experiencing the truest of human values."

The fourth meeting took place on the afternoon of Thursday, December 2nd, from three to four o'clock. This time he came out with Muto-san. After my talk with Muto-san, he showed me a letter he had brought with him—"a letter to my family," and so I had him read it to me. I took down several *tarka* from it:

How could I bear  
Even a particle of ill-will—  
This being of mine that, clinging to Buddha,  
Is voyaging into the Eternal.

Of being and of not being—  
These thoughts have I cast adrift.  
Like a clear autumn sky I am,  
Today and all the while.

Just now have I discovered  
The mystery and the depth  
Of the fathomless might  
Of Gracious Buddha.

The image of Amida Butsu  
Dimly can it be seen  
Only after I chant "Namu-Amida-Butsu" \*  
With my whole soul.

\* I.e., the *Nembutsu*. See above.

Among these poems was one touching on the Sino-Japanese problem:

Even after the breath of life is extinct  
Would I pray  
That the Land of Wu [an ancient name for China] be in peace,  
And prosperity beam over her forever.

The fifth meeting occurred for about forty minutes on the morning of December 10th (Friday), at which time Doihara-san said, "I knew nothing of my defense counsel Mr. Whalen's sending an appeal to the Supreme Court. I am sincerely grateful for his kindness. Only with regard to the outcome of the appeal, I am leaving everything in Buddha's hands and am not expecting anything."

Then, saying that he had expressed in *tanka* form his feelings upon hearing that his last moments were at hand, he read the following poems to me. They had probably been written on the 29th of November.

Farewell to thee,  
Moon in the window!  
My life ends this night,  
And I am loath to leave thee.

My past is a dream  
Of sixty winters,  
And how peaceful and serene I am,  
A soul that has found salvation.

Although my body die  
And fade in the dews  
Of the Court of Execution,  
My soul shall not fade.

How sad the voice  
Of the train, through the night.  
It sounds  
As transient as life.

What care I for the fires  
Of the Eight cauldrons of Hell!  
For am I not a sacrifice  
On the altar of Peace?

Blessed with the happiness  
Of the faithful though I be—  
Told that my time is come,  
My heart gives a sudden beat.

Concerning the last verse he said, "This is frankly how I felt, and it shows how tightly worldly passions held me. I kept chanting 'Namu-Amida-Butsu.' It wasn't that I was afraid or anything like that. You might compare it to the quiver of a warrior girding himself for battle. I am sure there must be some reason for it. I felt ashamed, but it must have been my karma. I felt even stronger than ever that now there was no other way than that of 'Namu-Amida-Butsu.' " Then he continued: "With regard to my execution being postponed, I am neither especially happy nor sad. Each day it is put off, my life of 'Namu-Amida-Butsu' goes on. For that I am really happy." And over and over again he entreated me to tell his wife and children about his faith, and to lead and direct them. He drew near to the statuettes of Kwannon I had brought with me that day—they had been left at my home by a charitable man of Nagano Prefecture, a graduate of an art school, with the wish that the seven condemned men be allowed to pray to them—and bowed in reverence, before leaving me.

*KOKI HIROTA*

Seventy-one years old. Was born in February, 1878, the eldest son of Tokunomon the stonecutter, who managed Hiro-taku's Stone Works in Funamachi, Fukuoka City. Was known as Taketaro when young, spent his boyhood as a stonecutter's child; later became a priest in Shoringe Temple, changing his name to Koki. During his schooling at the Yushuka Chugaku, he exercised at the Genyusha and earned a second-class Master's Degree in Judo. After finishing at the First High School, he graduated from the College of Political Science, Tokyo University, in 1905—in the same class with Toyotaro Ushizuka, the former Mayor of Tokyo. The present Premier, Shigeru Yoshida, was one class below him. In 1905 he became a cadet-official of the diplomatic corps and was sent to China. After occupying posts as Third Secretary of Embassy, Foreign Office Secretary, and First Secretary of Embassy, he served as Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office Intelligence Bureau, Chief of the American-European Bureau, Minister to the Hague, and Japanese Representative at the German Reparation Conference held in the Hague. He became Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.

He was appointed Foreign Minister in the Saito Cabinet; and finally, in March, he formed the Hirota Cabinet. Although he resigned office in the following February, he became Foreign Minister in the Konoe Cabinet, in June. After resigning this post, he retired from official life. At present, his second son, Masao (35), resides at 7408 Fujitani Karasumura Kaiganshita, Fujisawa, and his eldest son is living in Omagari, Koishigawa, Bunkyo Ward, Tokyo. He is Vice-Manager of the Yokohama Branch, Tokyo Bank.



The Hirota family belongs to the Zen sect, and the family tombs are in Shofukuji.

[As far as the question of war guilt was concerned, Hirota was Premier when the Anti-Comintern Pact was signed, and Premier or Foreign Minister during much of the time when Japan's war plans were maturing. And he was also a protégé of the infamous terrorist, Mitsuru Toyama, head of the Black Dragon Society. But even so, Hirota has been the recipient of more sympathy than any of the others, and it has been felt that in his case the death-penalty was a mistake.]

My first meeting with Hirota-san was from eleven A.M. till noon on November 17th, just after I had been talking with Matsui-san.

I read him Colonel Oie's last statement first, and then explained about the change in Hirate's state of mind, and went on to give him Shibano-san's last words. And then I told him that a Christian service was always held for those of that faith. I did this so that he would understand that a Zen Buddhist like himself would not have to have the same rites as an Amidé Butsu Buddhist—i.e., a believer in salvation by faith. I also reminded him of his fundamental happiness in having been given the death sentence.

Hirota-san just sat there, listening quietly. I have no notes in my possession of anything he may have said about all these things.

The second meeting lasted from 11:00 A.M. until 12:00 on November 24th (Wednesday), just after I had met Kimura-san. That noon the radio announced that General MacArthur's review had decided to uphold the original judgment of the Court, but of course I did not know this at the time and so could not tell Hirota-san.

I asked him what kind of books he was reading.

"One of those you sent us: 'Meditation on Ideas.' It's very philosophical, isn't it," he replied.

I told him that immediately after I had seen him last I had run into a student in front of the Marunouchi Building, collecting signatures for an appeal for commutation of sentence for him, and that I had added my name to the list. I told him that I had asked the student if he were a relative of his, to which the student had answered, No, but that he was from the same prefecture, Fukuoka. I told him that this showed that many Fukuoka students were busy working in his behalf. And I also told him that various people who had known him—among them a student who had attended my lectures at the University, although I did not know it at the time—had come to my home during my absence, saying that they had been his beneficiaries at various times, and wishing to be remembered to him.

I also told him that the newspapers were reporting that his two daughters had fallen sick and been bedridden ever since the sentence was pronounced; and that the public had been deeply impressed by the incident in Court at the time of the final decision, when he had smiled up at the gallery. I told him that it was reported that his second son, upon receiving condolences, had said: "It is just as well for my father. I would have him die on the gallows. It is better that he should die." But I added that of course, as his son, he really hoped his father's sentence would be commuted. The young man was undoubtedly in a difficult position.

At this, at last Hirota-san's glum face broke into a smile.

I also spoke to him about the possibility of man's having an immortal soul. And I described to him the change of heart Doihara-san had undergone. And I said that I believed

he—Hirota—would be the object of even greater public interest and sympathy after his execution. And I gave examples to show him that the families of the men who had been executed here were leading happy lives.

But I found he was paying me but slight attention. He broke in with—"I want to hand over my hair and fingernail clippings." And taking a small packet done up in toilet paper out of his breast pocket he added, "Because I don't know if I can see my family."

I explained this remark to an American officer later, and was permitted to take away the packet.

At the moment, I informed Hirota-san of the regulation forbidding the delivery of the bodies of executed persons to their families, and told him of my vain appeal to General Eichelberger when the first man to die here—Yuri-san—was executed. Hearing this, Hirota-san looked considerably relieved.

I read the first three and last chapters of the "Sutra of the Three Promises"—I read the same sutra with Hirota-san and the others in the Buddhist Chapel later, just before they went out to be executed—and explained it to him and showed the close bearing it had on his own feelings now.

I asked him about visitors, to which he answered that no one had been to see him as yet. I had heard myself at the Central Liaison Office that Hirota's family alone had paid no visit to the prison. When I mentioned this fact he said, "I have nothing special to tell them even if they did come. Still, I would like to see them again. They may have been confused by the formalities a visitor has to go through."

So I asked his eldest son's name and business. He was vague about the address, seeming to know only that it was close to Dentsuin. So I told him I would get in touch with

his people. I also notified him that he should request one of the officers that a telegram be sent. This would be sure to go through. Then I took my leave.

Hearing the news soon after of General MacArthur's statement, I went immediately to the faculty meeting at the University and had the clerk send a telegram from the office:

"Five people go to visit Sugamo stop Ha" [nayama]. I worded it thus so that they would not know who had sent the wire, and go at once. My plan worked, for through this wire five members of the family did go to visit him in a hurry—their first visit after sentence had been pronounced.

On the morning of November 28th (Sunday), Masao Hirota came to my home and I handed the hair and finger-nail clippings over to him.

On this day Muto-san's wife, Doihara-san's son, Matsui-san's wife, and Hirota-san's son had come together. I talked to them about this and that, and read them Oie-san's last letter. Among the things Masao Hirota told me before leaving were the following: first, that the children would be careful of their health, so not to worry; second, he had already visited the prison representing the family and thought no more visits were permitted; and third, that they, like their father, had nothing special to talk about and only wanted him to know that they would carry on, in spirit.

My third meeting with Mr. Hirota was from three to three twenty-five in the afternoon of November 26th (Friday). Doihara-san's son had come to my house that morning from ten till ten thirty-five. I left for Sugamo immediately after. Going into the Liaison Office, I met Mrs. Tojo and her daughter Yukie-san and received their messages. Then from two to two fifty-five in the afternoon I met Tojo-san and listened

to his queries and confession of faith, and, as I say, met Hirota-san later, from three until three twenty-five. He was led in by an officer this time, and I believe must have requested the meeting himself, though once seated he was silent most of the time. He looked as though he were waiting for visitors.

I asked him if he had any *tanka* or other poems or memoirs to give me.

"My achievements speak for themselves, for I have given my whole life to the public service," he answered. "I feel that I have nothing to add to them now."

"But surely you have some 'impressions' you would like to leave?"

"No, nothing. Just to die when nature calls."

I insisted. "Surely you must have something else."

The answer came. "I told you all I wanted to, just before the sentence was announced in Ichigaya. I have lived my life with the feeling that everything finally ends in blankness, and that I would say what there was to be said and do what there was to be done. Now there is really nothing else to be talked about. We can but live as nature wills, and die as she wills. Such are my convictions."

"Haven't you been a Zen Buddhist?"

"Well, I did study Yung Ming in my childhood, that is, in Middle School."

"That's rather akin to Zen, isn't it?"

"Yes, in a way it's quite close."

"The other day, when I met your son, he was saying that he felt much the same as you do."

"I have always left my children free to go by themselves in paths of their own choosing. I have never tried to interfere."

"Then who has been offering up sutras for your wife since her death?"

"A man I've known for a long time, an acquaintance of Takashina-san's of the Sodo sect, living in Karasunuma, has been kind enough to——"

I broke in: "Day before yesterday after I saw you, I at once wired your home. They seem to have come here yesterday, only it being Thanksgiving Day they were not admitted. I've heard that they came again this morning. I don't know the circumstances, but this time they were told that they couldn't see you today but to come on Monday. When I arrived I was told that they had just left. Mrs. Tojo informed me as I was coming in."

He displayed some feeling at this, and his face brightened. But it soon turned sad again, and he spoke in English to the officer seated next to him. To his question, the officer replied, "Nine o'clock Sunday."

(I wondered why they had to turn away these people who had come so far. I was worried too, realizing that it was Friday and that perhaps the executions might be carried out tonight. It turned out though that the officer was right, and that visitors were actually admitted at 9 o'clock, Sunday morning.)

"Are they allowing you to have newspapers now?" I asked.

"We haven't seen any for three days, from the twenty-fourth to the twenty-sixth."

That meant that no papers had been permitted them since their sentences were approved. So I told him that the latest announcement upheld the Court's judgment, and I gave him an outline of General MacArthur's statement. I also told him that his hair and fingernail clippings had been deliv-

ered to his family; upon which he said, "Well, it doesn't matter if they receive some twice, does it?"

Nothing really seemed to have any effect on him, and he was unbelievably pathetic and pitiful. I could not feel anything in the least inspiring there. The officers looked at me intently, and then turned to gaze into Hirota-san's face. They seemed worried. Afterwards they both came up to me and asked, "How is Hirota?" I believe they were really worried. So I told them that I myself could not tell exactly. Then they wanted to know whether I was going to see him again even after this.

"Any time and any number of times," I answered.

The next occasion was on November 29th (Monday). I met Mrs. Tojo, her daughter Kimie-san, and Kaho Kimura-san at the Branch Office of Sugamo. Everyone believed that this would be the last day. I thought so too, and still am in the belief that the authorities had been quietly making ready. What made me believe this was that they had wanted me to meet all seven of the condemned men. So I saw Doihara-san from ten till eleven, Matsui-san and Hirota-san from one till two, Tojo-san and Muto-san from two until two-fifty, and Itagaki-san and Kimura-san from three until three-forty.

I told each of the men that this would be the last day, and probably the last meeting in the Chapel. I also told them that, in respect to their posthumous Buddhist names, Motozane Doihara, Hatsuko Muto, Masao Hirota, and Fumiko Matsui had come to my house yesterday (Sunday), and that I had listened to their opinions on the matter, that we had discussed the disposal of the hair of the deceased, and that a meeting was going to be held at Matsui-san's house in Izuyama after the execution, when I was going to speak to them. In leaving,

everyone of the men, thinking this to be the last opportunity, turned to the Buddhist statuette in the front of the Chapel and bowed reverently. And each turned again and gave me a nod of acknowledgment, since I was too far away to give them my blessing.

On this day, three officers attended all four interviews. They were two captains and Lieutenant Coker. After it was over I had supper and then was told, "We want you to stay here overnight for two or three days. You will be a guest of Sugamo Prison." They even had a radio brought into Room 36 in the officers' quarters, where I was to sleep.

That afternoon, when I had Matsui-san and Hirota-san in front of me, I explained to them what I had already discussed with their relatives the day previous about the Buddhist names to be given them after their death. Matsui-san said, "That is satisfactory," but Hirota-san objected.

"I already have a Buddhist name, which was worked over and discussed by three temples in Fukuoka after my wife's death."

I asked him what it was. He said, "Wait a moment," and I waited, but he could not awaken the slightest recollection. He then gave me some more of his hair and fingernail clippings, and on being asked how he had cut them, answered, "With a nail-clipper."

"Then what do you do in your cell?"

"I play cards by myself."

Such was the Hirota-san that I knew.

### *SEISHIRO ITAGAKI*

Sixty-four years old. Born in Morioka, Iwate Prefecture. Studied at the Morioka Middle School, classmate of the poet, Takuhoku Ishikawa. Member of the 16th Graduating Class



of the Military Academy. In the same class as Doihara. After finishing Military Staff College in 1916 held various posts in China. Staff Officer of Kwantung Army in    then became successively Chief of Mukden Special Military Intelligence Corps, Adviser to the Military Administration of the Manchurian Government, Under-Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army, and Chief of Staff. At the time of the Mukden Incident,    he was a Senior Staff Member of the Kwantung Army and the center of schemes and intrigue on the spot. After serving as Commander of the 5th Division, he became Minister of War    and left that post in August    to become Chief of Staff of the China Expeditionary Force.    He became Commander of the Army in Korea, and from April    to the termination of the war was Commander-in-Chief of the 7th Army in Singapore. Family burial grounds are in Hokkeji in Kitayama, Morioka. At 842 2-chrome, Shimo-ochiai, Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo, reside his wife Kiku (51), third son Masao (22)—in his second year at Musashi Junior College—eldest daughter Kiyoko (25), and his second daughter Matsuko (19). He once told me, “My eldest son died of illness in childhood; my second son is an officer, now a prisoner, I think, of the Russians in Khabarovsk, Siberia. He may not be back before I am sentenced.” His family belongs to the Nichiren sect, but he appears to have made an extensive study of Zen Buddhism.

The first meeting was on November 18th (Thursday) between ten and eleven fifteen in the morning.

As I had done with Hirota-san, I first mentioned his happiness at having received the death sentence. I gave him a sketch of my fundamental beliefs and desires in coming to

Sugamo. I told him that I had heard that his family temple was the Hokkeji in Morioka, and that since I was to be at the neighboring Genkyoji on July 4th on the occasion of the anniversary of the death of my teacher, Shimaji Daito, I wanted to make a little talk about him. I also read him Oie-san's last words and explained their meaning to him, and told him that only his hair and fingernail clippings could be delivered to his family.

"I have told them only to keep my picture, and that even a funeral is unnecessary. Is that all right?" And on my agreeing, he continued, "A person like me is most fortunate to be able to be transformed into an image of pure gold. I am very happy if in the carrying out of the Potsdam Declaration I can become a pedestal for eternal peace."

Finally he asked, "What was the name of that man, the Colonel whose last words you read me just now?"

"Colonel Oie. —How are you getting along in your single cell?"

"It's terribly inconvenient, for my dentures are gone, and my glasses too. But at least the food is the soft American variety and I manage somehow. And from yesterday we have been allowed to take our exercise by twos."

"Are you reading any books?"

"They hand us one book at a time, but they change them within a fixed number of days, and sometimes it is quite difficult for me to get more than half finished. I was reading the 'Sutra of Kwannon' at first, but that was taken from me and I am reading a book on history now."

The second meeting was from 1:30 until 2:45 in the afternoon of November 22nd (Monday).

He expressed his gratitude to the authorities for the treat-

ment accorded him, saying, "My wife, my third son, and my eldest daughter were permitted to see me the other day. I am very grateful for being able to see them all at once."

I congratulated him on having his glasses back.

"Yes, they allowed us a pair soon after I spoke to you—one pair. I can get along with one pair, but Doihara-san, who has to wear two pairs at the same time to read, is having a hard time."

"Which books are you reading of those I sent in the other day?"

"I have chosen 'Correct Postures for Prayer' and 'Saint Gyokai.'" A soldier brought several into my cell and told me to take two, but I had already seen 'The Essence of Buddhism,' so I didn't take it."

I explained to him that I had sent in a copy of 'The Essence of Buddhism' for each of them, and that they were to choose two volumes in addition to 'The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures,' 'The Essence of Buddhism,' and 'The Torch of Home,' the last-named of which contained some of my own writings.

"Is that so? You see, we can't speak or understand English. Our own language doesn't work here in prison, and we can only do what we are told."

"But Hirota-san can make himself understood, can he not?"

"Yes, Hirota-san can. When we are out in the grounds for exercise and sit on the benches, he has chances to speak English. But he is a silent man. I feel sorry for him having to be put in with us military men. He may be hoping for a commutation of sentence. He doesn't go visiting to the other cells much, either. Matsui sometimes calls on him, but their talk doesn't seem to last long. Doihara and I have been

classmates, you might say, ever since our Army Prep School days, and we were together in China, so naturally we double up when we can. (Three are not permitted together.) Muto and Kimura, having worked together as Bureau Head and Deputy during the war, enjoy playing cards by themselves. Tojo is the type of personality, as you know, that likes to stay by itself. Matsui was Doihara's and my senior in China, and likes to play chess with either him or me, which leaves the other three rather to themselves. As a matter of fact I was just playing cards with Doihara when your summons came. Doihara was thinking it might be he you were calling for; and he gave me a letter that he wanted me to hand over to you."

So saying, he took out a letter. I tried to give the conversation a more general turn, but he went on:

"I can write to the outside once a week. I sent a letter out last week, and have written two or three sheets for this coming Thursday."

"Is there any limit as to the number of words?" I asked this question because the condemned men of Class B and Class C were limited to 150 characters.

"No, there's no limitation."

"Can you always keep a pencil with you?"

"No, they only give us pencils when we use them."

At this point I explained the entire text of "The Sutra of the Three Promises" and told him I wanted him to make a study of it. "At the end I will read it with all of you, because I believe it expresses exactly what you feel."

"Thank you. I have already read 'The Epistle of the Lament of the Unbeliever,' and think it very fine."

"Have you written anything yourself?"

"Well, in one of my letters I have given my views on life and death."

"Do you mind giving me a rough outline of what you said?"

"I wrote today too, thinking I might be able to send it off at the end. Well, in the opening I write about life and its infinity. For one thing, even though I die my children will carry my life on. In the second place, though my body dies it will unite with nature in her grandeur; it will become one with nature, which is God, which is Buddha, which is eternal truth. In the third place, history will always repeat itself, so that the life-factor will know no death. For these reasons, I am convinced that our lives are eternal.

"Looking back over my past, I feel so overwhelmed with remorse that I do not know what to do with myself. My whole life has been immersed in the Manchurian and Chinese problem. And in spite of all that, look at present conditions in China as described in today's newspapers! I can't help feeling that all our labor and our whole lives have been in vain. Therefore I feel that, becoming a guardian spirit of the nation, I would like to follow those who went before me and strive to attain what I was unable to, while alive."

I interrupted him at this point. "You use the words 'guardian spirit of the nation,' but what do you mean by spirit? The original meaning of 'spirit' was the soul of the departed, but in later days it has come to mean something which would cause harm to people. I hope you don't mean that you would harm the living, or seek revenge. You really mean a spiritual guardian saint of the nation, don't you?"

He nodded in strong assent. "Yes, yes, that's it. That is exactly what I mean." And he continued: "You see, I felt I

would be committing a sacrilege if I called myself a god; so I used the term spirit. To go on with my letter—I tell my children that when they strive for the country I will always be there beside them, that by forsaking my physical self I shall attain the powers of a god to go where I would. These are not my words. Shaka Himself says, ‘Purify thyself and attain the true awakening. Refrain from dissoluteness.’ The exact wording may be slightly different, but this is the sense. I say to my children: ‘Go and preach to the people, as earnestly as you would if you were the one child of Sakya Muni.’ I wrote a *tanka*, too:

I am going to follow  
In the footprints of those gods  
Who watch over our people  
Throughout ages eternal.”

I interrupted again. “How about changing the word ‘gods’ to ‘Buddha’? I believe the feeling that you expressed just a moment ago is better shown that way.”

“Thank you very much for your suggestion. Thank you very much,” he said over and over again, his face shining with joy.

Later on in our conversation he came back to immediate matters.

“With regard to my defense counsel’s petition for commutation of my sentence, I have left it up to him. Of course I have talked it over and expressed my wishes that there be absolutely no popular movement for a reduction of sentence.”

Between four and seven o’clock in the evening of November 25th (Thursday), Mrs. Itagaki visited me at my home.

"I received a postcard at one o'clock this afternoon and came at once," she explained. "My husband was very happy at our last meeting, saying that he had had a very delightful talk with Dr. Hanayama."

I told her that I had been asked by Mr. Sung, the special correspondent of a Chinese newspaper, for the loan of a piece of writing with the signatures of Itagaki, Doihara, and Matsui on it. I wondered if she might not have something of that sort at home that I could borrow for him.

On this occasion she told me that her own family belonged to the Shingon sect, and that her father had been an instructor at the Army Preparatory School in Sendai and had numbered Itagaki and Doihara among his pupils.

The third meeting was from three to three-forty in the afternoon of November 29th (Monday). On this day, as I have said, I met all seven men—Itagaki-san and Kimura-san coming together at the time stated. The guards were three officers, two of them handcuffed to their prisoner, while the third stood behind the four to watch them.

During our conversation Itagaki-san said, "My position was such that I feel I should maintain a certain reserve before the public. So in my will I shall include nothing of a public nature, but only a few words for my children. One or two sheets will do. As I have said before, a single photograph will be enough for them to remember me by; they need hold no funeral, nor erect for me any monument."

When I asked him about his Buddhist name he replied, "I know nothing about the rules governing such things, but in a letter to my wife I suggested jokingly that it be 'Layman of the Alcove of the Continent, an Ascetic of the Japanese Expedition.' So if it is all right with her, it is perfectly satisfactory to me."

So we decided on Koju-Muryo-in-Shaku-Seishiro ('Radiant Life, Alcove of the Infinite, Shaku-Seishiro').

It was on this occasion that he brought me his copy of "The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures" and begged me to give it to his family, because he had written so many things in it.

I agreed. As the reader will discover, I received Tojo-san's, Doihara-san's, and Muto-san's copies after the execution. These contained their late owners' comments and poems, as well as the copied poems of others. Kimura-san's book, on the other hand, contained no marginal writing at all. In the end, the authorities would not let me have Itagaki-san's copy because it was so packed with notes, some of which, I suppose, were illegible or ambiguous.

The fourth meeting was from 2:30 to 3:20 in the afternoon of December 9th (Thursday). (On this day I saw Matsui-san first, and Itagaki-san later.) As usual, I lit the candles in front of the altar, burned incense, and waited. This time he came in guarded by an enlisted man and accompanied by an officer. As I sat there in my chair meditating before the altar, I caught sight of Itagaki-san clasping his hands in prayer over his beads. Then I turned full around and faced him. As usual in these interviews, he was seated in a chair about ten feet away and a little over a foot lower than the level of my platform.

"I hear you are getting newspapers again," I said, opening the conversation.

"Yes, yesterday one copy each of the 'Asahi' was given us."

"It would be nice if you got them every day."

"Yes. We are exceedingly anxious to see them, but I imagine the authorities are afraid our minds may be dis-



turbed by what we read there. Yet reading makes everything clear. Yesterday, for instance, in the article on the Supreme Court, I saw the special conditions that had delayed its decision. But when things are delayed that way—of course it has no effect on my mind—my mind is made up—but—” After a silence he went on, “It appears that the Chinese Reds have driven close to Nanking, and the world situation is—. If they should transfer the capital, they could not possibly go to Chungking again; so I would say that most likely it will be Canton, in South China. You see, I’m still quite interested in matters like that.”

He broke off, and I changed the subject.

“I have recently received a letter from a relative of yours—a Jiro Tagawa—you know him, don’t you? He is the pastor of the Kyonan Church in Shinagawa. Let me read it to you:”

Sir: I am a relative of Seishiro Itagaki’s [he was his father’s cousin], and therefore the announcement over the radio that General MacArthur has reaffirmed the verdict fills me with emotion. As a pastor, I have been preaching now for the past fifteen years, but my becoming a minister in the first place was through the guidance of the late Tazo Itagaki, a brother of Seishiro’s. Rev. Tazo prayed fervently even through the war, and preached to save Seishiro; but Seishiro said that if he believed in Christianity he would be unable to make his obeisance to the Imperial Shrine, and for this reason alone he did not enter the faith. And now that the time has come for him to leave the earth, I pray that the blessed words of the Gospel will become as life unto his soul, and that he may believe and be saved and journey to Heaven. With the hope that God’s blessings in all their richness be bestowed on him, I hope that, should the op-

portunity to do so present itself, you will transmit this message to him, together with the words of Scripture on the attached sheet. In closing, I wish to tender my deep gratitude for all you have done for his guidance.

This was the letter addressed to me, and with it on a separate sheet of paper were four short lines from the Bible:

1. It is fixed unto man, that once he die, and that having died, he does receive judgment.
2. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.
3. Fear not, only believe.
4. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

On the date of the confirmation of the verdict.

"That is all. It appears that he is serving at a church in Shinagawa," I said.

"It must be in Shinagawa. His grandmother—my aunt—did quite a bit for me."

"Did your brother embrace Christianity, also?"

"My brother was a very zealous member of the church at Kashiwagi. After graduating from the technical department of the university, he was employed by the Imperial Railways in Hokkaido for a time, and after that he worked in a training center of some kind."

"Your family seems to have various connections with the Christian Faith."

"Both my brothers were Christians. I had two brothers—the other, younger than the Taizo mentioned in the letter and the one next to me, being called Seizo. He is in Kyushu. He is now retired, but formerly was a professor of biology in the Medical School of Kyushu University."

"And yet you did not join the Faith?"

"You might say that my karma kept me apart. Taizo tried to persuade me into it, but I was abroad so much, and somehow never seemed to listen to his talk——"

"Couldn't you let me hear one of your *tanka* or other poems?"

"There is one that I wrote for you the other day when I thought my time had come, and another I wrote when the execution was postponed. They are both in my cell, but I can give you their main points."

"If you please."

But instead of giving me his poems at this time, Itagaki-san went on to speak of his prose writings.

"In the first letter or essay I wrote about—I wonder if I could call it my *weltanschauung*. The story is rather vague, but some time before the last war broke out, there were circles in Japan that foretold a final world war, and we supported the idea. Support may not be the right word. I will say we believed in it, and felt that this final world war would occur within twenty years. Japan had to be prepared for it. After this final world war would come a final peace. Japan must be prepared for that too.

"We did our best to get ready. And then, contrary to our expectations, the Sino-Japanese incident occurred. I thought this a terrible thing and wanted to end it as soon as possible; and, since I was in the War Ministry at the time, I expended all my powers in that direction, but failed. The incident at

last developed into the recent World War, and Japan came to the point where she had lost all the strength she needed for the final war.

"In my paper I go on to say that if this war comes, Japan will be greatly troubled and embarrassed now that she has renounced war, but that if true peace, which Japan has adopted as her ideal, can be attained, we should put up with any temporary embarrassment. We should have to wait for that day of true peace. When that comes, a World Nation will be established, of which Japan will be a cooperating member. In that nation, each of the present nations will follow the custom suited to it, and form a culture-state of one form or another.

"Now in this case, Japan must develop her knowledge of science as well as the highest type of spiritual culture. Here, her Buddhism would play a very important part."

He went on in this vein for a long time.

Then he took up his second piece of writing, which concerned his personal relations with Buddhism. He went into a long discourse about a man named Fujū Nittatsu, who in the closing days of        brought some Sacred Relics of Buddha to the War Ministry, saying he had received them from a high priest in India, and that, desiring to use them as a means of ending hostilities between Japan and China, he wanted them placed in a miniature pagoda and sent to the front lines. And then, in April 1545, when Itagaki-san was the Commander of the Army in Korea, he received a message from the man saying that since Korea had no Relics he was sending some there too. To make a long story short, a pagoda was made for them in Seoul and they were enshrined in one of the rooms at Itagaki-san's headquarters. This should have ended the matter, but shortly afterwards

he was transferred to Singapore, and since he felt he could safely entrust them to no one else, he took them with him, had a small chapel built and prayed there morning and night. But the war ended in August, and he was arrested and placed in solitary custody. Before this occurred, he had entrusted the Relics to Terauchi-san [the former commander at Singapore, and one of Japan's chief "higher-ups"]; but Terauchi-san died about a month later. Afterward, when Itagaki-san was in Ichigaya Prison, he learned that one of the members of his staff had taken very good care of the Relics, and that at present they were enshrined in the safest spot in the walled granary of this man's home in his native Yamaguchi Prefecture, and that prayers were being offered before them morning and night.

"I regret the course things have taken, and so after I am dead I want you to hold Buddhist services for me at the Hokkeji in Morioka, and also, because I have been the recipient of the Emperor Meiji's grace, other services for the Imperial Household and the Nation at Momoyama where the Emperor is buried; and then I want to meet Saint Nichiren at Reishuzen so that I may meet Shaka-muni. You are the only one, Master, that I am divulging this to."

"I understand. Since you tell me, it will stand to your credit in the future. But your wife knows about this, doesn't she?"

"Yes. I told her the other day when she came to see me."

I returned to the subject of his poems.

"You say you have written some *tanka* or something like that? I would like to hear one of them."

"I have nothing worth mentioning. Really."

"Please."

"Well, here are a few 'thoughts':

As the Declaration of Potsdam  
Decreases eternal peace,  
I give up my life.

How happy I am  
To throw my life away:  
For a lasting peace,  
To turn my dung and clay to shining Gold!

“Man is indeed made of dung and clay inside, though his surface may be embellished. I was thinking of the words of Prince Shotoku when I wrote the next one:

I have found, at last,  
That in this world of deceit  
The way of Buddha  
Is the one truth.

Look over this soul of mine,  
And this life of mine—  
Lo, 'tis eternal  
As are the Heavens!”

Then I opened to the Ninth Chapter of “The Epistle of the Lament of the Unbeliever,” and as I read aloud explained the entire text to him.

He gazed at me intently. “That’s absolutely true—absolutely.”

This Chapter Nine is a sort of catechism or dialogue between Shinran and his disciple Yuien, and tells us that no matter how truly one may be enlightened, the desire to speed to Paradise, to leave this earthly world, is not felt. If one could really come into communion with Buddha, one would have the desire, but as a matter of fact no one does have it.

Itagaki-san spoke again.

"It is really quite annoying to have the execution put off, and I would rather have them kill us quickly; but then I suppose the delay is giving us a deeper enjoyment of Buddha's grace. When you climb above life and death, that is how you feel."

"That's good," I replied. "Just a moment ago Matsui-san was telling me that he had exactly the same feeling. I believe it was last week that Tojo-san told me he was prepared for being killed quickly, but decided that postponement was Buddha's way of urging him to strengthen and harden his faith and that of his family. So he was leaving everything to the Ways of Faith. I told him his attitude was most blessed. I am sure you all have the same feeling."

"We are indeed leaving everything in Buddha's hands. Our own puny plans are good for nothing."

"Then I'll be seeing you next week. In the meantime please take care of yourself."

"Doihara was saying something about there being another meeting for him after your last visit."

"Yes. I am going to see Kimura-san now, and intend to see Doihara-san tomorrow morning with Tojo-san. Will you please tell them so. And do keep yourself in good spirits."

He was smiling cheerfully when we parted, made deep obeisance to the altar, bowed to me and left. As he was going out, I called out a loud "goodbye," upon which he turned and nodded.

### HEITARO KIMURA

Sixty years old. Was born at Nitto-mura, Irima-gun, Saitama Prefecture, in 1888. His father, the late Isuke Kimura, served in the Russo-Japanese War as a major. Member of the Artillery class of the 20th graduating class of

the Military Academy; he numbered Shojiro Iida, Masaru Yoshida, Tei Shimomura, Teiichi Yoshimoto among his classmates. After finishing the Army Staff College in 1916 he became an instructor in the Artillery and Engineering School, then Professor of Tactics in the Staff College, and was stationed for three years, from January in Berlin.

he became a member of the General Staff. In November, he attended the London Disarmament Conference as a member of the entourage. After his return he became Commander of an Artillery regiment and then Chief of the Controls Section, Equipment Bureau, and in Chief of the Ordnance Bureau. After the Sino-Japanese incident, he became an Army member of the Imperial Headquarters, and in March with his promotion to Lieutenant-General he became a Brigade Commander in China. In October he became Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army, and in April Vice-Minister of War. In March he became a member of the Military Council concurrently with the office of Head Chief of the Ordnance Administration. In September he became Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Burma, and was in that post until the termination of the war, a year later.

His family lives in Kawashima-Daihachi-en, Mitsui, Neyagawa-cho, North Kawachi-gun, Osaka.

[By the Allied Powers he was held responsible for the horrors that took place in the Burma Campaign.]

This man Kawashima, to whom the Daihachi-en belonged, was a fervent Buddhist and Kimura's relative. He allowed the Kimura family to occupy a bamboo-wooded piece of wasteland in one corner of his large property, and they developed it. Kimura-san's wife, Kaho, is fifty-one years old,



and his oldest daughter, Yuri-ko, is twenty. This daughter transferred to the Girls' High School attached to the Nara Women Teachers' College during the war, and graduated from the Advanced Course of the Kori Seibo Girls' Academy located within the Kawashima-Daihachi-en grounds. This Seibo Academy is a Christian missionary school run by a Frenchman named Mameire. Kimura-san's eldest son is Taro, eighteen years old. He attended the Osaka Military Preparatory School, but is at present in the Science Department of the Third Higher School, in Kyoto. Mrs. Kimura is a graduate of the Nara Women Teachers' College, which she attended after graduating from the Futsueiwa Girls' School. So it is possible that Kimura-san embraced the Christian faith. His daughter having studied at the Seibo Academy was a convinced Christian and seems to have expressed a desire to join the church, but her mother appears to have wished to postpone her baptism until after her marriage, in order to avoid possible difficulties. Kimura-san's own mother was baptized shortly before her death at the age of 76, and her funeral services appear to have been Christian. Kimura-san received notice of all this when he was overseas. The Kimura family were very intimate with M. Mameire, and it was no doubt Kimura-san's younger sister's joining the Church that had influenced the others. The family graves are in Aoyama Cemetery. The foregoing facts I obtained on the occasion of my first interview with him.

The first meeting lasted from 9:45 to 10:30 in the morning of November 19th (Friday).

Up to this time I had had no recollection of Kimura-san's face at all, although he told me that he had attended both my sermons—the one described at the beginning of this book and the one I delivered to the Class A prisoners in the

period between the ending of the Tokyo Trial and the announcement of the verdicts. When I first asked him about his faith, he answered that he simply believed, without saying whether he was a Christian or a Buddhist. So I spoke to him on the "Sutra of the Three Promises," which I was to read to them all at the end. Kimura-san took a copy of "The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures," which contained the sutra, out of his pocket, put on his eye-glasses, and followed the text with me. He said he agreed with the ideas expressed. Kimura-san was hard of hearing and told me that morning that when he tried to listen to my preaching my words had come so fast that he couldn't catch all I said. So whenever I spoke to him thereafter, I always raised my voice.

I told him of my plan to read this sutra to them all at the end, and advised him to study it carefully.

Next, since his family seemed to be largely Christian, I asked him how he wanted to be treated in this regard. In fact, before I met him, Chaplain Walsh had told me that a German priest had come and asked to see Kimura-san and told him that the family begged Kimura-san to be baptized. Before granting the interview, Father Walsh wanted to know how Kimura-san himself felt on the subject. So I asked Kimura-san. His reply was to the effect that his family could believe what they would, but that he did not think he wanted to be baptized. I heard from Chaplain Walsh later that the German priest had come again two days after the first visit. Already knowing Kimura-san's wishes through me, nevertheless to make sure, he granted the priest's request and let him see Kimura-san who refused the offer of baptism, so the priest left.

I met Mrs. Kimura, Yuriko-san, and Taro-san for the first time for about half an hour at noon on the 22nd (Monday),

in a small recess or alcove adjoining the Buddhist Chapel. The three had just finished their first meeting with Kimurasan, and Father Walsh arranged for them to see me. I told them that it was against my principles to persuade or urge anyone either for or against Christianity, Buddhism, or Shintoism. I left it to the individual will, only giving such help as I could. I also told them that the remains would not be returned to the family. Mrs. Kimura replied that she had found his attitude at today's meeting most splendid, and asked me to tell him that the three of them were going back home with their minds at ease. And she also asked a continuance of my favors.

The second meeting was from 10:30 to 11:00 in the morning of November 24th (Wednesday). He was the first one I saw that day. As usual, he came into the Chapel handcuffed to an NCO of the guard, and followed by a watchful officer. I told him about meeting his people, and in reply he said, with a look of relief, "Taro has been telling me he has been making the rounds of the temples in the Kinki area with a professor of the Third Higher School, so he may have acquired a religious tinge to his way of thinking. Will you please guide him in the future?"

I replied quite sincerely, "I have met many young students, but when I met him the other day I couldn't help envying you for fathering such a promising lad."

His cheeks warmed with a smile as he said, "It sounds silly coming from a father's mouth, but both children are cheery souls."

"How many years have you spent with them?" I asked.

"Only about thirteen, I should say. So if they have any qualities that win the praise of others they owe them all to my wife. She is a splendid woman."

"Is there anything special you would like to tell me this morning?"

"I have written two letters, and said what there is to be said. So there is really nothing else."

Then he told me the following concerning his children: "When they were thinking of moving to the Kawashima-en, several people, including the Governor of Nara Prefecture, tried to dissuade them. But the children insisted that they wanted to clear the land by themselves, without any outside help. And they did so, finally putting under cultivation the whole tract. They carried the job through to a finish, and certainly won my confidence."

November 29th (Monday). This was the first day of suspense. At half-past nine in the morning I met Mrs. Kimura in the Branch Office of the Liaison Office at Sugamo. She begged me to ask whether he had received the two letters she had mailed on the 15th and the 24th of November, and to ask him to leave a few words of advice for the children. I told her, "If it happens that they have not reached him, I will deliver their contents for you." Fortunately, she had copies of both letters in her handbag and let me read them.

With them were three *tanka*:

The foundations of our land  
Will ever be safe and secure.  
And I pray that you, my beloved,  
May watch over them.

How bitter to know  
The fall of the cherry—  
When once in the spring  
It bloomed to charm the eyes of men.

Ne'er may I forget  
The lessons I must teach  
My living children,  
That they may live, both strong and true.

That afternoon for forty minutes beginning at three o'clock, I had the third meeting with him and Itagaki-san. Tension in the prison was quite high on this date, and I was asked to see all seven of the men. I met Doihara-san from ten until eleven o'clock in the morning, and then, from one in the afternoon, because of the shortness of the time, it had to be two men together. From one until two it was Matsui-san and Hirota-san, from two until two-fifty Tojo-san and Muto-san, and from three until three-forty it was Itagaki-san and Kimura-san. This was out of the ordinary. And in addition, the meetings today were different in that the officers themselves came with their left hands cuffed to the right hands of the men. I sensed that matters had come to a climax.

I first asked Kimura-san whether any letters had reached him, to which query he answered that they had not, and then he added, "I sent one out the other day addressed to you, Doctor. Did you get it?"

I told him that I had not received it, and then asked him about his Buddhist name. "How about 'Koku-Muryo-in, Shaku-Heitaro' (Radiant Light, Alcove of the Infinite, Shaku-Heitaro)?" and he agreed. Itagaki-san, who was seated alongside him, had already voiced his agreement to his own posthumous name.

The fourth meeting was from 3:00 until 3:45 in the afternoon of November 30th (Tuesday).

I was telling myself, too, that this was the last day.

By this time, I had been told that I could accompany the men to the spot of execution. I was also told that when I visited the single cells I could not go in, but that I could talk with them from the corridor. After breakfast I returned to Room 36, to which I had been assigned for copying the letter Mrs. Kimura had placed in my care the preceding day.

After my noon meal, I paced the sunny courtyard for a couple of hours, dwelling on what I should speak about when I visited the cells that night. A little after two o'clock the Christian services were begun. I began to feel a little queer, becoming nervous about the passing of the time. At three o'clock, they finally said I could see the men, and Kimura-san was brought to the Buddhist Chapel where we had met the day previous. I opened our conversation with a strange feeling, because I had believed that yesterday's talk would be the last held in the chapel, and that from tonight I would be visiting them in their cells.

I read him a telegram from ex-General Shimomura, to begin with. Shimomura-san wired in the belief that the time had come, and prayed that he would die a noble death. After that, I read him the letters of his wife, of Yuriko-san, and of Taro-san, which I had refrained from doing yesterday because of Itagaki-san's presence.

First, I read Mrs. Kimura's letter of November 24th, and then Yuriko-san's letter of the same date. We were over ten feet apart, and the room, roughly thirty-six by forty-two feet in size, was a big one; so in order to make him hear me I talked so loud that I nearly lost my voice.

I took out his wife's *tanka* of the 15th and held them up to him.

"Can you see this?"

"Not clearly."

"Then I will read them to you."

"Oh, that's all right. They are the same as yesterday's, aren't they?"

"Yes."

"Then it's all right."

"By the way, who is this Isako-san?"

"My mother."

I read the *tanka* to him.

To the call of the radio,  
Speaking of his being tried,  
My head bends low,  
And my eyes blur.

Isako

He hung his head and appeared deeply moved.

At this point, I told Lieutenant Croker and the other officer that I had tired my voice and was hoarse, and asked if he couldn't be brought up closer. So they pulled Kimura-san's chair up very close.

Kimura-san said, "You don't have to talk so loud now."

I then read the entire text of his eighteen-year-old son Taro's letter to him.

My dear Father:

The evening of the 12th is far advanced. It has just struck ten. I am quietly seated at my desk. Although I have picked up my pen, a hundred emotions overcome me and I don't know how to begin. I feel overwhelmed by an unknown impulse and an unknown power, making me unable to utter anything. I am a poor writer anyway, and regret that I am unable to put down all I feel. Time and again now I have

picked up my pen to discover that I cannot give any order or arrangement to what I am feeling; so I will let my pen itself take charge and glide its own way.

This morning, the day after the verdict, I went to school as usual, finished my usual six hours with composure, and came home. I heard the news last night over the radio in company with Grandmother and Sister. It was most tragical for us. The verdict was miles away from what people around us had been prophesying. But I assure you, I was not flustered. I had been thinking it over and preparing myself for something like this to happen. This may have been because at that very moment a reporter from the "Mainichi" was seated on the porch. Or perhaps it may have been that I had nothing in reserve and so could do nothing but accept the fact as it was.

And yet it was the cold, irrevocable truth. The deeper my fathomless love and reverence for you, my father, the greater was my overwhelming grief. The tragedy of losing my father, of having my father taken from me, is unbearably great.

But I will not lament overmuch. I am sure, Father, that you would have it so. Looking back over my eighteen years, I fully realize how incomparable are the many things you have done for me. And now when I must part from you, Father, I cannot tell you how much I regret my lack of piety and the lack of an opportunity to do for you what I would. But the ties that bind us, father and son, beyond severance by any power, shall be eternal.

The one thing that I regret now is the fact that I was too young when you went abroad to really know you, to really touch your whole self, during the period that I spent with you. I cannot help deploring the fact that on my heart is imprinted only the image of a father looking at his infant



child, and that your image is non-existent or extremely vague in my conscious, grown-up personality. I longed for at least one heart-to-heart talk with you. And now we are come to the parting.

You have, as a soldier, devoted your whole life to the nation, and I have been given life on the earth, perhaps through chance or the inevitability of fate. I know, though, that for me there could be no greater happiness than that of being your son.

It is not that I am regretting that we were unable to spend much time together because you were a soldier, because of your career and my hopes. In my heart a hundred emotions ebb and flow, knowing no end.

In the future, we children will get along in harmony, give the best of filial piety to Mother, and develop our lives in our own ways. We will take care to do nothing against your desires. I am now standing at the most important crossroads of my life. It can be said that I am in the midst of my mental growth. The development of character is now the urgent thing.

To be frank, I am still undecided whether I should continue in the Science Department or whether I should change over into the Letters and Arts Department. Yet I sense the fatalistic inevitability that rules life. I can only develop and modify my destiny within the orbit that Fate has ordained.

The newspapers told me of your attitude in the courtroom at the time of the delivery of the verdict. Your attitude of dignified composure throughout the proceedings appears to have been truly worthy of that father of mine who once commanded great armies, and was most admirable. I even felt the nobility of that spiritual peace that can only be attained by one who has transcended both life and death. The problems of human living, the problems of life and death,

and the problems of society—these still remain for me to dig and delve out. I am greatly disturbed over my own shortcomings.

Concerning my way of thinking, which seems to have worried you so much, at present I do not have any special leanings at all, and I believe I can beg you to rest assured as to that. I realize that my future will be, like that of the nation, eventful and turbulent. And yet even in this are treasured my boundless hopes and happiness. I will advance, undaunted by anything that may turn up. I want you to watch the developments of my life closely. And please accord me your spiritual support.

(The following was written on the night of the 15th.)

Yesterday, Mother suddenly returned. She has become thin, and my sympathy goes out to her. I am sure she has become reconciled to it, and yet I feel that the optimistic views of those around her may have had quite a bit to do with making the shock greater. I mentioned to her not long ago the possibility of things turning out as they have. To think that those words of mine were the truth!

With respect to our paying you a last visit, I understand that you are against it. But the time will come when we will regret anything left undone; so I would like to see you again. I know it will be hard to say our goodbyes, but I intend to go up to Tokyo at the first opportunity. My heart bleeds for you, Father, as I realize the pain you must feel. [Here something is deleted] . . . but I believe your final worry is over us. We will never forget your loving heart. Your picture will become the guiding light of my life. I feel sure that your spiritual state, with death facing you, is on a higher plane, and that your mind is crystal clear.

I have written on this and that, but I realize that it is all in terrible disorder.

Now let me tell you how things are over here. The six

chicks are all getting along well. The farm is just fine now, and the barley and beans are beginning to sprout. Winter is drawing near. I am in excellent health and have not even caught cold this year. I'm still going about in a single short-sleeved shirt, and intend to go lightly clad the whole year round. Of course, I know I should not overdo the thing and ruin my health while I am still going to school.

Entrance examinations for college are coming up next year. I feel dismal at having to give so much time to preparing for them, but I must pass this barrier and I'm going to work hard. Recently I was deeply moved by reading the notes of the war dead among the Tokyo University undergraduates, entitled "Far Across the Hills and Vales."

I wonder if there is any way by which we could let you see the pictures Mr. Hiraoka took of us the other day. Mother is leaving for Tokyo the day after tomorrow, so I am asking her to take them with her, along with this letter.

About the 22nd, the confirmation of the sentences by General MacArthur is expected to be announced, and I hear that after that visiting will be permitted. I am waiting for the day I can go to Tokyo and see you.

This may be my last letter to you, Father. Thinking it over, I realize that neither my pen nor my tongue can do full justice to all I feel. My endless prayers go out that you may spend your time, until the day that is coming, in health and in peace.

I am entrusting this to Mother. Farewell.

Your son,

Taro

Kimura-san sat there with tears in his eyes, drinking in every word, until I had finished.

"I am struck with admiration," I said, "that a youth of eighteen or nineteen should write so splendidly and have so

noble a spirit. In this letter he says that he is thinking of transferring from the Science to the Letters Department, and I think that this boy should certainly go into the latter. I would like to see him developed into a splendid spiritual leader."

"The reasons for his going into the Science Department were that from youth I had a liking for things like mathematics and physics, and that the boy himself was proficient in these subjects. But I have left the matter to his own free choice; so if he should be thinking of making the change, would you please give him some guidance?" [He did make the change, much to Dr. Hanayama's satisfaction.]

"Tomorrow is December 1st," I said, returning to the present. "We can meet again, I hope."

"They have been telling me so, but I wonder."

(I did not know then of the appeal that was being made to the U. S. Supreme Court. Deep down inside, I felt that the executions would be carried out that night.)

"In any case," Kimura-san went on, "if we are unable to meet, will you please tell my wife that I have understood the contents of the letters and how they all feel at home, and that I am really at peace."

"Goodbye, then."

Kimura-san bowed to the altar, and went out with a light smile brightening his face. At the door, he turned around and thanked me.

And then, to my surprise, the authorities told me, just after my interview with Kimura san ended, to go home for the night. It finally dawned on me that things had taken a sudden change. After supping with Father Walsh, I was taken home in a jeep. It was at six o'clock, over the radio, that I heard of the appeal being made to the Supreme Court.

The carrying out of the executions had been postponed, and the members of the various families had spent almost all of December 1st, morning and afternoon, in making visits. It was after this, a little past seven o'clock in the evening, that Mrs. Kimura and her two children came to my house and talked with me until almost eleven-thirty.

I read them Oie-san's last letter, spoke to them on life and religion, and told Taro to read "The White Road," giving him the book. I also had them listen to the notes I had made of my meetings with Kimura-san, and then read the words of Doihara-san telling of the change that had taken place in his thinking. They departed very grateful for this. On the evening of the 9th, Mrs. Kimura and Yuriko-san came to see me again, and on this occasion they begged me to ask him "to leave a will or a few lines to the children from Father."

Next morning, on the 10th (Friday), I found Yuriko-san waiting for me at the Sugamo main gate.

"You see," she said a little shyly, "I am a Christian, and Father, because he is dying a Buddhist, may feel constrained and not leave any words for us. I am worried about that, and want him to feel free to leave us something. I had forgotten to ask you last night to tell him this."

The fifth meeting was from 11 o'clock in the morning of December 10th (Friday), and lasted for about thirty minutes. I read him three letters I had received for him on the 9th, and outlined two I had received on the 3rd. In these last was the entreaty that he should leave something in writing for the children. "Anything will do," I explained. "Anything—just so I can take them something they can keep."

"Yes, yes. I understand," he said. "And thank you so

much for everything." And then he bade me goodbye and left.

*IWANE MATSUI*

Seventy-one years old. From Aichi Prefecture. Ex-General. He graduated at the top of the ninth graduating class (classmates: Nobuyuki Abe, Junsaburo Mazaki, Sadao Araki, Shuru Honjo) of the Military Academy, and was the recipient of the Imperial gift-watch. He graduated second from the Army Staff College and received an Imperial gift-sword. He served as a member of the General Staff, Regimental Commander of the 39th Infantry, Staff Member of the Expeditionary Army to Vladivostock, and of the General Headquarters Kwantung Army, Chief of the Second Bureau of the General Staff, the 35th Brigade Commander, 11th Division Commander, Member of the Military Council, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Taiwan (Formosa). During this period, he attended the Disarmament Conference in Geneva with Tsuneo Matsudaira and Osami Nagano, representing the Army. On the occurrence of the Sino-Japanese incident in September, he became Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Forces in Shanghai, and remained in China for half a year from the landing at Woosung until the fall of Nanking. After his return, he became Governor of the Dai Nippon Koa-Kai, later becoming President-Chief of the Koa Headquarters, and Councillor to the Cabinet.

His wife Fumiko (56) resides at 829 Izuyama, Atami, Shizuoka Prefecture, with his adopted daughter Hisae. He has no child of his own. Halfway up the hill behind his house he built an altar to Kwannon.\* In preparing this

\* See Glossary.

altar he brought soil from Nanking and Shanghai which he burnt, and buried in it the ashes of the war dead of both nations. A certain Matsuo Takagi is caring for the altar. In the unveiling of the Kwannon, he requested the services of Bishop Oshima of Zojoji, and since then Dr. Toshiyasa Shiio, at present at Zojoji, has come on several occasions to perform mass for the dead. Riri Nakayama is also helping out in this. The Matsui family have been Shintoists since his father's time; before the Meiji Era they were Zen Buddhists.

[General Matsui was held responsible by the War Crimes Tribunal for the horrors taking place at the "rape of Nanking," ]

The first meeting was from ten to eleven in the morning on the 23rd. On the previous occasion he had not been permitted to wear his glasses, but now he had them on.

"Which of the books are you reading of those I sent in the other day?" I asked.

"Taiei Kaneko's 'Devotion to the Moon,' and Masanori Numanami's 'The Road to Conversion,'" he answered.

Then he asked me what temple I lived in. I told him that at present I wasn't living in a temple, but in Kurume Village. I also told him about my having received special instruction for three years from the Reverend Kohzui Otani, on Mt. Rokko. Upon hearing this, he said that when Reverend Kohzui was staying in Peiping at the time of his exploratory expedition into Central Asia he used to spend quite a bit of time with him. And they had kept up friendly relations afterwards. We talked of the Reverend Kohzui Otani's passing away, and were filled with memories.

"Have you written anything?" I inquired at last.

"I have just written a letter to my wife telling her to get in touch with you, and that I would give you my hair and fingernail clippings."

"May I ask what religion your wife professes?"

"Her family is of the Jodo sect; her father, in fact, received marked favor from Zōjoji. I myself am reconciled to my fate, but my wife is an excitable woman, and I'm afraid she may commit suicide after my death. We haven't any children, but before coming here I arranged to adopt as our daughter the maid who has been with us for thirty years."

"Please don't worry," I reassured him. "I will do what I can to calm your wife. Incidentally, I sent her a postcard just this morning, telling her I would be at home next Sunday and asking her to come and see me."

"I am very grateful. That was the only thing I was worried about. I have nothing to ask for myself, but if you would lead her through this difficult time, I should be very happy."

He asked me the directions for reaching my home in Kurumemura, in spite of the fact that I had already told her in my card. Later, when I met his wife, I was surprised at his memory, for the directions he had given her were identical with those I had told him.

I believe it was on the afternoon of the 25th that I heard that five members of his family—Fumiko, Tori, Nobuo (a nephew), Hisae (the adopted daughter), and Hisashi Okada were visiting him; so I awaited their return at the Liaison Office. That was my first meeting with Mrs. Matsui. She came to my home as requested on Sunday the 28th. Minoru Doihara, Hatsuko Muto, and Masao Hirota had already been there since before noon, and I read them Oie-san's last letter,



my notes of my conversation with Doihara-san, and Kaoru Fukuhara's last letter to his father.

These three left early, but I asked Mrs. Matsui to stay behind and told her about the General's anxiety. She promised to take no rash action, and handed me two *tanka* for him. Before leaving, she begged me to tell him the following:

(1) She would like to care for the Kwannon, and after her death she would like to deed her present house over to it.

(2) Her present income was sufficient and he shouldn't worry about that. She had worked out a plan for getting along, and that, supplemented by her homegrown vegetables, her chickens, and taking in sewing, would see her through.

(3) After his death she would like to have the record of the Tokyo Trials, together with his speech before the Court, printed and distributed among her friends at some appropriate time.

(4) She would follow his wishes and return to Buddhism.

(5) She would be waiting for him to come back and take her, so that she could go to an early Paradise.

(6) As she had been a Shintoist heretofore, she had held services every ten days, but hereafter she would follow the Buddhist ritual and hold them oftener.

(7) After the execution, she would have the members of all the families concerned meet at the Miu-An in Atami, and would like to have me give them an account of the last moments of the Seven.

(8) The fields now under cultivation would not be taken from her, and not to worry about the matter.

The third meeting was from one to two in the afternoon of November 29th (Monday).

Matsui-san came into the Chapel with Hirota-san. He said, "I was with Hirota-san from 1905 at the Legation in China. Our fates have been linked ever since."

I read them the two *tanka* I had received from Mrs. Matsui:

My heart so tense—  
And now its beat grows faint—  
No longer can I discern  
The difference between aye and nay.

Rather an orchid that  
Scenting the air is plucked away,  
Than a flower left on the twig,  
To shrivel and fade.

These two poems had been written by Mrs. Matsui immediately after arriving at my house. She said the thoughts had come to her on the car on the way. I looked up at Matsui-san.

"Does this orchid symbolize your own feeling?"

"Yes, I believe so."

At the end of the interview, I told both men that if they had any last letters to write to have them ready tonight, and, thinking that this must be the end, both men—especially Matsui-san—bowed low to the altar before going out.

The fourth meeting was from 1:20 until 2:20 on December 9th (Thursday).

Matsui-san came in as usual on his clattering clogs and

wearing a purple gown over his American uniform. He seemed slightly palsied and was constantly trembling. After saying my prayers I turned around to discover that before seating himself he had taken the gown off—a very noble thing for him to do, I thought, in this cold. I asked him how he was, and if he was getting the newspapers.

“Thank you. Yes, they sent in some papers yesterday. It appears that the American Supreme Court has taken up our case. It’s all the same thing, though. In my opinion, the quicker it’s over the better.”

“Yes, you may be right.”

He grumbled a little. “And just now, when we had got ourselves set for it——”

“I have a letter for you from a Sadao Mitsunaga, at Zenkoji in Nagato. Do you remember the person?”

“Oh, yes. He is the custodian of a replica of the Kwannon at my place.”

“Then let me read it to you.”

If you can transmit what I have written on the enclosed sheet for Matsui-san, while he is still alive, I will deem it a great favor of fate. When Matsui-san returned from Shanghai, I was deeply impressed by his vow to initiate the building of a Koa Kwannon, and to have masses for the war dead of both nations held there for all time. And I humbly begged him for a replica of this statue. He consented, and it is now being revered as the guardian saint of the Alcove of the Dead in my temple here. I have met Matsui-san himself only once, but to me the occasion was the event of a lifetime. We are only trusting to the promises of Amida Buddha, to enjoy the fruits of that land on the other shore. Namu-Amida-Butsu. Namu-Amida-Butsu.

And on a separate sheet were three *tanka* by Saint Shinran. And there was a note to Matsui-san:

Matsui-san:

As long as there is life in the body of this lowly priest, I will keep up the prayers to Kwannon, and keep your sacred vow in mind and pray that peace may come to the world. Kwannon is Amida-Butsu and Amida-Butsu is Kwannon. Farewell, and let us meet in the true Paradise.

Matsui-san's face shone with happiness.

"I am truly in the state of mind that this priest mentions. Please tell him to rest assured as to that."

"Very well. Another thing. That Mr. Riri Nakayama, with whom you have so many ties, has fasted for three seven-day periods, and after purification has copied, with great pains and in splendid calligraphy, the 'Sutra of the Three Promises' on a big piece of fine Chinese paper. He has attached a long letter to this and given it to you seven men—only I was told I could not hand it over to you, so I took it home with me and gave it to your families."

"That was very thoughtful of him. Please give him my best regards."

"And there are letters from people all over the country."

"I have seen three from people I don't know at all."

"What! And do the authorities send them in to you?"

"Yes, they've been doing so recently. I am coming to believe that it is the mercy of Kwannon that I am to be executed. If I should be given life imprisonment by the Supreme Court now, it will make it quite difficult."

"That's true. After you've once made up your mind——"

"The officers here are quite sympathetic, and I have come to understand their kindness."

"Yes, yes. That is so."

"I wonder if I can't hand over to you something I've written. I have left it in my cell, but——"

I asked Captain O'Neal, and he brought me a sheet of paper with two *tanka* and a free-verse poem on it.

At this point, Matsui-san delivered a discourse, unusually long for him, on the characteristics of the various nations in Asia, notably of China:

"Of course, we Japanese should examine our consciences, but it isn't right for the people over there to feel that every time we show the least bit of softness we are crying for their favor. Self-examination should be prescribed for both of us. Chang-Yu is an old friend of mine; I helped him out quite a bit when he was in difficulties, and my wife knows him. So some time ago she asked him to pray at the Koa \*-Kwannon. But his answer was indefinite. Finally he did consent to go and offer up 'all his sympathies' for me."

He went on to say that, unless bound by spiritual ties through religion, keeping up a real friendship for ten or twenty years is quite difficult. "As I said in the Courtroom, 'Looking back at things now, Japan has really made a big sacrifice.' " Then he added: "If I were still alive, I'd like to go to Annam in French Indo-China."

Later on, commenting on the Nanking Incident, he expressed himself scathingly on the moral depravity of Japanese officers on the Divisional Commander level:

"The Nanking Incident was a terrible disgrace. Shortly after entering Nanking, when memorial services were being held for the dead, I mentioned that services should be performed for the Chinese dead also; only the others, including my Chief of Staff, said that the Chinese would not under-

\* See Glossary.

stand, and that it would affect the morale of the Japanese troops; and then even the Divisional Commanders opposed me. In the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) I was a captain, and comparing the Divisional Commanders of that time and now, the present groups are beyond question inferior. At the time of the Russo-Japanese War, treatment of Russian prisoners, to say nothing of the Chinese people, was excellent. Things went along nicely. They did not, this time. The Government, most likely, did not appreciate the fact, but a great change had taken place since that day in matters like *bushido* [Japanese chivalry] and humanity. Immediately after the memorial services, I assembled the higher officers and wept tears of anger before them, as Commander-in-Chief. Both Prince Asaka and Lieutenant-General Yanagawa, the Area Commander, were there, but I told them all that after all our efforts to enhance the Imperial prestige, everything had been lost in one moment through the brutalities of the soldiers. And can you imagine it, even after that, these officers laughed at me. To take an extreme example, one of the Divisional Commanders even came up and asked, 'What's wrong about it?' I am really, therefore, quite happy that I, at least, should have ended this way, in the sense that it may serve to urge self-reflection on many more members of the military of that time. After things turning out this way, I am really eager to die at any time."

"Your words are most high and noble," I said.

He went on, "The other day I told my wife too that it was Kwannon's mercy that was allowing me to die in this manner, and that we should be grateful."

"What you have told me harmonizes exactly with what the Indian Justice on the Tribunal feels."

"Yes, yes. They showed me what the Indian Justice had

written. He expressed himself well. His words cover all we might want to say about such matters. A typical Indian, he views things from a philosophical standpoint. His people have for many years gone through experiences that——”

“All right, then, I will see you next week. Please take care of yourself and see to it that you don’t catch cold.”

Matsui-san was helped into his gown by the officer, bowed to the image of Buddha on the altar, and except for his usual clattering clogs departed in his quiet way. I called out goodbye to him at the door, as I always did, and he turned and nodded.

### AKIRA MUTO

Fifty-seven years old. From Kumamoto Prefecture. Ex-Lieutenant General. Member of the 25th Graduating Class of the Military Academy. Classmates include Kyoji Tominaga and Harutsugu Suga. He is the son-in-law of General Senenobu Ono, and after finishing the Army Staff College became successively an instructor at the Staff College in

Section Chief in the General Staff, member of the Kwantung Army Headquarters, Member of the Headquarters of the Expeditionary Forces to Central China, and from October, until April, was head of the Military Affairs Bureau of the War Ministry. As a member of the so-called Tojo-Kimura-Muto line, he is considered responsible for the expansion of the war.

he became Commander of the Second Defense Division in Sumatra, and he was Chief of Staff of the 14th Area Corps under General Hirofumi Yamashita in the Philippines until the termination of the war.

His home is in Hakushi Village, Kaminashiki-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture. His eldest brother, Naoya Muto (60) is a

practising physician in Kurume. His sister, Eiko Ogawa (70) lives in Shiroyamacho, Kumamoto City. His wife, Hatsuko Muto (46). His wife's mother is Tsuma Ono, widow of General Ono. His elder daughter, Chiyoko (19). He was living in Sugahara-cho, Shinjiku-Ward, Tokyo, but lost everything in the bombing, and the family now live in an old shack belonging to Mrs. Ono. Mrs. Ono, as the widow of a soldier, refused under any circumstances to evacuate, and as a result, they lost all they had in the fire. His family belongs to the Honganji school of the Shinshu sect of Buddhism.

Our first meeting was from 1:30 for nearly an hour on the afternoon of November 18th (Thursday).

He said, "Both my parents were pious Buddhists, and when Buddha's birth festival was held, I, as a child, was often entered as a child-processionist in the festival parade. From my young-officer days, I began a study of the Shinshu, Nichiren-shu, and Zenshu sects of Buddhism. And I studied Christianity too, but somehow was unable to find myself there."

I was explaining about his hair, his will, and his diary to be delivered to his family after execution, but he broke in with a complaint about the way the trial had been conducted in the Philippines:

"To say that we held up babies to be bayoneted! Why, that's absolutely—" he choked up and couldn't speak.

I was beginning to read him Oie-san's last letter, when word was brought that a visitor had come, so he left.

My only notes of anything else said on this occasion were as follows:



"I remember I took my mother's ashes to the Nishi Honganji in Kyoto. Therefore I feel that this time I am going home to my mother's."

I showed him the *tanka* that ex-Captain Hirate had composed on the day he was told his execution was to be carried out.

How happy I am to know,  
This day, that I am going  
To Mother's,  
Where so long my heart has wished to be.

The second meeting was from 10:40 to 11:15 in the morning of November 23rd (Tuesday). Muto-San spoke as follows:

"Yesterday, my wife came to see me by herself. Special permission was granted her, though it was Monday. On the previous occasion, on the 18th, my daughter and a nephew of mine from Kumamoto came; so on these two occasions I have been able to see all three. I have been rather indifferent about religion until now, but I spoke to my wife yesterday, telling her again that I thought it necessary to adopt a religious way of life."

"To what sect does your wife belong?" I asked.

"Her family has followed the Jodo Shinshu sect, just like mine."

Then alluding to the sudden interruption at our first meeting, he went on, "I was sorry to have to leave when the time wasn't up. Please continue the reading of that letter."

So I finished Oie-san's last letter and then explained "The Sutra of the Three Promises," asking him to make a study of it. Then I asked what kind of books he was reading.

"Just at present, Rev. Daihei Kaneko's 'Man.'"

"Of the seven of you, Hirota-san alone appears to be lonely and sad."

"Yes, but Hirota-san is a man of great moral strength, and I'm sure he'll come through all right."

I told him I was thinking only of the impression Hirota-san might make, considering the fact that these seven were to be executed for the most important war crimes.

To this Muto-san made a most courteous reply: "You will please put us right, if you see us behaving in an ignoble or undignified manner."

The third meeting was from two to two-fifty on the 29th (Monday)—that portentous 29th, when we thought the end would come that night. Muto-san came in with Tojo-san, in whose presence he seemed rather constrained, probably because he had been one of the latter's subordinates. On this occasion I read a letter from his wife and another from his older daughter:

#### TANKA OF FAREWELL TO THEE

From Hatsuko, Nov. 28th, evening

As on thee, my lord,  
Is pronounced the sentence of death,  
I can feel,  
Softly blowing, the autumn wind.

How beautiful the words  
Of the warrior  
As he faces the end  
Of life's long road.

May the Heavenly Light  
Brighten, ah, make very bright,  
Your outgoing path, my lord,  
You who leave to come no more.

I am sure that my late father is watching your departure today. . . . [Something deleted.] A storm has been brewing since evening, and in the midst of the piercing cold I can picture the noble figure of your martyrdom. We are truly in a whirl of emotions, defying description. From the bottom of my heart I feel for you as I watch your departure for the world of changeless, endless life. I regret that I cannot accompany you, but there will come a day of reunion there on the other shore. . . . [Something deleted.]

Dr. Hanayama talked to us very graciously at his home today, and I felt greatly strengthened, happy and proud. I was ushered into a world of Heavenly Glory which will last forever. Chiyoko and I will encourage each other and live on without ever losing hope. All my happiness during these past twenty years has been through you. I want to express my gratitude from the bottom of my heart.

Then, please take care of that cold of yours. I am watching your departure for that Place where Father and Mother are awaiting you.

Hatsuko

### Letter from Chiyoko

To Papa:

It was with gratitude that I receive the diary you sent me through Mr. Okamoto. Once more you have made me feel your deep love embracing me; boundless emotions overcome me and I am at a loss to tell you how I feel. Nothing is more precious to me. I will treasure it all my life. I am

grateful that through Dr. Hanayama I have been able to send one last word to you.

We received the condolences of the Ogawas in Kumamoto City today and are all grateful. I thought I would let you know about it.

The north wind is blowing fiercely and it is terribly cold. I wonder how it is with you in your room with the wooden floor. How is the sore throat that was bothering you so much? Day in and day out, whatever I am doing I am always thinking of you. But please be at ease in your mind: Chiyoko isn't fretting or brooding. She is reconciled to everything.

One more thing. I am firmly convinced that my dear, darling papa is the noblest man in the world.

Chiyoko

At this meeting I informed the two men that "Shaku-Akira" or "Shaku-Hideki" would be affixed to the Buddhist name "Eternal Light, Alcove of Infinity," and also explained to them the meaning of the words. "Koh" was the character meaning Light; "Ju" was the character meaning Life. This meant that the Light would be fathomless and endless, and that Life would be eternal. The Light symbolized the wisdom of man; the final hopes of man were in endless life: no matter what the religion, everything ended ultimately in this desire. And by "Koh Muryo, Ju Muryo" is meant that this eternal life stretching into infinity was filled with the knowledge of the wise. By combining the two, one obtains the reading "Koh Muryo Ju," which in the original stands for "Amida," or Buddha. The "A" in "Amida" is a negative prefix, and "Mida" or "Mita" means to measure; so "Amida" signifies "immeasurable." In the original Sanskrit, the words "Bha" and "Ayus" come after the "Amida," but in the course of time these have been omitted.

This word "Ayus" means Life, while "Bha" means Light. So when we say "Ju-Muryo, Koh-Muryo," we are calling on the absolute Buddha, or the absolute God—in other words, idealized Truth based on Humanity. Another name for it is Amida-Butsu. Therefore, this word Amida-Butsu is an appellation attached to something which cannot be seen, heard, or known by man—that is, the absolute itself. Our ideal, our final hope lies in having this absolute become as one with the human personality or character.

So—I told them—although in this worldly society of ours you each have your own personality, each differing from another, in the absolute world, which you will eventually attain, you will all be one. I decided that you should all have the same Buddhist name of Koh-ju, Muryo-in. In this name there can be no conflict between the various Buddhist sects, nor, for that matter, is there any difference between Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity. Furthermore, it is a name which, in the thirteen hundred years since Buddhism came into Japan, has never been used as yet. The War Trials, in the deeper sense, are an attempt on the part of mankind to move forward towards an eternal peace; and since you men now symbolize the starting point in that direction, I think the originality of this name, together with its meaning, is most fitting.

I also explained that in order to indicate each individual personality I had decided to affix the personal name which they had used in this mortal world—such as Akira or Hideki or Heitaro—to the Buddhist name. According to Buddhist custom in the past, a name calling for one Chinese character or three Chinese characters in the writing is very rare. The usual number is two or four. But in this case, I thought that it would be permissible to set a new example, seeing

that they were going to open up a new era with a new religion—that of lasting peace.

As they all believed this would be the last meeting, they made especially low bows to the altar as they left.

The fourth meeting was from three to four in the afternoon of December 2nd (Thursday). From half-past one until two-forty I saw Tojo-san. Time was getting short, so I met Muto-san with Doihara-san. On this date, Muto-san had me listen to some *tanka* and other poems and songs. He told me that his religious faith had deepened since the verdict was announced, and on the day previous he had said the same thing to his wife, when she came to see him for the second time.

“Have you anything else you would like to say?” I asked.

“I have written what I feel every day, without embellishment, and without playing heroic or gallant. I have written some *haiku*, and although none of them are very good and are just what popped into my mind——”

“That’s just fine. Let’s hear them.”

He unfolded the paper.

“These are two *tanka* I composed the day the verdict was delivered”:

No greater glory can there be  
Than that with only one self  
To offer I am  
A sacrifice to peace.

Fated as I was to die  
On that southern isle,  
What can I have to regret  
In yielding now this life of mine?

“Here is another one, written yesterday when the execution was postponed”:

How unexpected it was  
That my life was lengthened  
By five days—  
I must give it love, my own.

“As you can see from this poor verse, now I realize the value of life. Not that my will-power is weakening at all; I’m simply looking objectively at life and its inestimable value. And I’m putting it down in writing, for I feel that if my wife and child can only see this truth, their hate will turn to love, and they will harbor gratitude in their hearts rather than bitterness. Yet there are times when I suffer ‘upsurges of uncertainty.’ I was thinking that perhaps I was the only one, but I’ve heard from my seniors in our group of seven that their experience is the same. I guess in all this lies something instinctive to all men; so ‘Chapter Nine’ still speaks the truth. For those who have arrived at complete spiritual awakening it may be true that they can efface the heart until ‘even unto the fire it will be cool,’ but for us ordinary mortals, our instinct for life cannot be wholly got rid of. It doesn’t matter if people call it cowardice, or faint-heartedness. That is not important.

“The nation is concerned with many things like government and economics, but it should be more interested in this question of religion. I believe that such interest would work a great change in our people. I am ashamed to say that until recently I myself have been spending my time quite carelessly. I did not care much about religion, and let what religious people said come in one ear and go out the other. That is why I am writing in a way that my wife and child

may understand. It was the other day, on the 29th, when I thought this was the end, that this *haiku* popped into my mind."

(I remembered that he had come in with Tojo-san, and that while I was speaking with Tojo-san he was quietly praying at the altar, seemingly lost in thought.)

The scent of the chrysanthemum  
Is gone, and Buddha  
Is looking down on me, from above.

The lone chrysanthemum,  
How brilliant it is,  
In the candlelight.

"I doubt if the people outside can understand this feeling of the lone chrysanthemum. The sense of being face to face with Death is so difficult to explain. This feeling I could not understand myself until now, and now I understand it through experience.

"Here is another one I wrote yesterday:

Happy I am to find  
Today, and every day,  
How easy it is to utter  
The Sacred Name.

"I am well aware that this isn't even a halfway decent *tanka*. I just jotted down what I felt. In my childhood I used to chant 'Namu-Amida-Butsu,' but I have been away from it so long. Only now, after I handed over my hair and finger-nail clippings to you yesterday, am I returning to it.



How cold it is this day  
When I hand over  
My half-silvered hair.

(Later, he changed the last line to "My hair across the screen.")

"The leaves are shaken down  
And swept away—  
The brightness of the winter maples."

(The foregoing was written on the day of the verdict.)

"This is not exactly a *tanka* on my beliefs. It just gives my naked feeling at the time. I used 'burnt away' instead of 'swept away,' at first."

"Your change improves it!" I said. "That's just right."

"Well, you see, I felt that it was like a temple priest, shaking down the leaves and sweeping them away."

At this point I spoke to Doihara-san for a while, and after finishing turned to Muto-san again.

"Last night," he said, "I wrote a sort of ditty called 'To and from Sugamo'—I doubt if it is any good."

I had him read it—it is referred to in a later chapter—and we said our goodbyes amid smiles and laughter.

### HIDEKI TOJO

Sixty-four years old. Was born the third son of the late General Hidenori Tojo, in Tokyo on December 30, 1884. Member of the 17th Graduating Class of the Military Academy, a classmate of Rippei Ogisu, Jun Otomiya, and Ryo-suke Yoshizumi. Was appointed 2nd lieutenant in 1905. After graduating from the Military Staff College was sent

to Germany as Military Attaché in Berlin. After his return he served in the posts of member of Military Affairs Section of the War Ministry, Chief of the Mobilization Section, Chief of the Equipment Bureau, Commander of the First Regiment, Chief Commissioner of the Military Investigation Committee of the War Ministry. In August, he became Commander of the 24th Infantry Brigade, and in September,

Commander of the Kwantung Army Kempeitai [the terrible military police], and later Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army. In May, he became Vice-Minister of War in the Itagaki Ministry; in December he became Supervisor General of the Army Air Force, concurrently with Chief of Army Air Force Center. In July, he became War Minister in the Konoye Cabinet. In November, he formed the Tojo Cabinet, and carrying the portfolios of Premier, War Minister, and Home Minister, he started the Pacific War. Later, he even took over the posts of Munitions Minister and Chief of Staff, and for a period of two years and ten months, until the fall of Saipan in the Marianas in July, held sway over the whole nation, the nearest approach to a dictator in modern Japanese history.

After the termination of the War, at 4:00 P.M. September 11, he attempted to kill himself with a pistol in his home at Yogomachi, Setagaya Ward, Tokyo, just as the detail sent by the Occupation Forces arrived to arrest him. The bullet failed to reach a vital organ, and within a month, fully recovered, he was lodged in prison.

His family consists of the following members: wife, Katsuko (60); second son, Teruo (36); third son, Toshio; eldest daughter, Mitsue; second daughter, Mrs. Makie Koga; third daughter, Yukie; fourth daughter; and daughter-in-law, Miyoko.

The family religion is Shinto.

[In the view of the Allied Powers, as far as Japan was concerned Tojo was Criminal-in-Chief. If no one else deserved hanging, he did. There was no doubt as to what he had done; in fact he gloried in it.]

The first meeting was from 2:30 to 3:30 in the afternoon of November 18th (Thursday).

On this date I saw Itagaki-san in the morning, and from one-thirty to two-twenty, Muto-san. It was after that that I met Tojo-san for the first time in the Buddhist Chapel. He came in alone, except for the guards. I might say that Tojo was the only prisoner who was always handcuffed on both hands to enlisted men, with an officer following close behind. The other prisoners usually came with one enlisted man.

As usual, I was praying facing the altar, but soon turned to greet him. His head was bowed and he wore his beads on his left wrist.

I told him how deeply impressed I had been by his assuming entire responsibility for the war, and then went on to explain "The Sutra of the Three Promises." He told me that he was reading "The Sutra of the Trilogy" at present.

I had with me several letters I had received from his family. Of these I read to him only the one from his daughter Kimie-san, while giving him a résumé of the others and transmitting some oral messages.

In response he did a characteristic thing. After each item, he lifted the left hand and bent his head low in grateful acknowledgment.

Then I described to him the faith of Tadao Shibano, who had recently been hanged, and read to him Oie-san's letter. In mentioning Yuri's execution, I informed him that the families were not permitted to claim the bodies of the de-

ceased. I also told him that I had given the Buddhist name "Koku-Muryo-In" to the twenty-seven men who had died to date, and explained its meaning as given several pages above.

When I had finished, he took out some notes and gave me some messages to transmit. These were of two sorts: the first public and the second private. Four points were enumerated in the public message:

1. The trial is over, and having fulfilled my duties, at least to some extent, I am filled with relief. So far as I am concerned, the sentence of death is deserved. I am sorry, though, not to have been able to persuade the Court to let me shoulder sole responsibility for everything and so spare my colleagues from being involved in trouble. I sincerely regret my failure to do this. At least, the Emperor was not involved, and that is a great comfort. Only as regards those of my fellow-countrymen who suffered from the war, my death sentence does not in the least absolve me from my responsibility. I am sincerely sorry for that.

2. Concerning the verdicts as a whole, I wish to avoid saying anything about them at this time. As for the atrocities and other inhumanities committed against prisoners, I sincerely regret them as utterly deplorable. It is my responsibility that I was unable to drive home, in the Army and elsewhere, the traditional benevolence of the Japanese people and the humanity of the Emperor. I only want the peoples of the world not to misunderstand this fact: that these atrocities and inhumanities were committed by a small part of the Military, and that neither the Japanese nation nor the Army as a whole is responsible for them. In other words, I want the world to realize that the guilt lies with a part of the Military.

3. Three years have passed since World War II ended, and dark clouds still cover the world. Viewing the Far East in particular, I cannot but be fearful of the future awaiting Japan. Yet I have a firm conviction that the spirit which Japan has cultivated and nurtured for nearly thirty centuries will not be lost in a day. I want to go my way believing that finally, with the aid of world-wide sympathy, the Japanese people will succeed in building themselves up again. I believe that because of the mutual understanding gained in the recent war, the age-old peoples of Asia will be blessed with prosperity.

4. For the war-dead, for the dead who died of wounds, and for the sufferers from the war generally, and for their people, I request further sympathy not only from our Government but from the Allied Powers as well. These people have simply worked and died for their country, and if any crime has been committed in this war, it is men like me—the leaders—who are guilty. With my execution, expiation should have been made. I beg sympathetic consideration for the families of the war criminals. I also beg that the prisoners retained by Soviet Russia be repatriated as soon as possible.

The foregoing matters are the things that trouble me, even though I shall shortly be executed.

Then followed the items he wished me to transmit to his family:

1. I am very healthy and feel quite well. I hope the execution will be carried out as soon as possible. Morning and night, Buddha is with me.

2. For visitors, I have chosen my wife and four daughters.

3. I sent out a letter to you on the 16th.
4. I know that both Teruo and Toshio were there seeing me off at the end. [He means that they were in the visitors' gallery when the verdict was delivered.]
5. There will be no confiscation of our property. Had you been driven from your land, you would have no place to live. I am exceedingly grateful for this decision.

He also asked that a copy of "The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures" be sent in to him.

Mrs. Tojo appeared at my house and requested this of me. I had given one copy to each of the Class A men before the announcement of the verdict, and Tojo-san had taken special pains and care in reading it, writing *tanka* and various comments in its margins. He had handed it over to his wife at Ichigaya on the morning sentence was pronounced, saying, "This is of great importance to me; I do not want to have it taken away from me, when I am executed." Hence the request that another copy be sent in to him as soon as possible. But this was difficult at first, because of fears that he might contrive to use anything whatsoever to commit suicide.

Now I told him, "As a matter of fact, I have already sent one in, wanting you always to have a copy. Hasn't it reached you?"

He answered that it had not, and grew a little indignant. "That is the right of the condemned. International Law has always prohibited the restriction of freedom of worship. Please make strong remonstrances on that point. I will do the same."

I said, "They are guarding against suicide and are quite strict, you know."

"Especially strict concerning me, I suppose," he replied with a wry smile. And he continued: "Please try to arrange it so I can see you as often as possible. When shall I be seeing you next?"

"I am hoping to see you as often and on as many days as possible. Ever since the day of the verdict, I have cancelled all my lectures at the University because I wanted to come here every day."

The second visit was from two o'clock for nearly an hour in the afternoon of November 26th (Friday).

I told him that I had received the notes he had read me the other day, to which he said, "Please let my wife see them."

I mentioned that I would like to make them public some time in the future to clear away misunderstanding, and then went on to explain how British, American, Chinese, and our own Japanese reporters kept following me around, asking information. I told him of my hopes that through him would be laid the foundation upon which to construct a world-wide peace for the future. He nodded in agreement with everything I said. He expressed his gratitude for finally having been able to receive another copy of "The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures," and taking it out of his pocket, he opened it and began to read.

I said, "Tojo-san, your request has gone through. Thanks to your complaint, I have been able to send the others extra copies too."

Concerning his Buddhist name, I told him that his wife had met me at the Liaison Office by the main gate and had informed me that through her uncle Buddhist names had already been given both her husband and herself, but that as

they had been published in the newspapers and were the target of some criticism, the children thought that I ought to give them new names. I also told him that she had asked me to perform as the officiating priest in the funeral services to be held privately within the family.

Next, I interpreted for him the meaning of "Koa Muryo-In," and explained that the "Shaku" following stood for one who obeyed the teachings of Syaka [Buddha], the Revered One, and had been used by Buddhist believers for over two thousand years. All this time, he kept nodding his assent and lifting up his left hand with the beads, as though in prayer.

Then he said, "I have told them definitely that there was no need for funeral services, but if it is done within the family I suppose it's all right. If you would be so good as to attend any that are held, I will be deeply gratified. With respect to changing the Buddhist names, I have a relative, the son of my mother's brother (his name is Tetsuo Tokunaga and he is about seventy years of age), who is the abbot of a temple called Mantokuji, in Kokura. My wife and I had him give us these posthumous names, though we were still living. I think my wife ought to take these facts into consideration before she makes a change."

(I was later told that the name given him was Eisho-in-Shaku, Jiko-Meiro-Koji, and that one of the papers had commented sarcastically, saying that it meant "Atonement in the nether world for sins committed in this.")

Next, I read him two letters from Mrs. Tojo, one from Yukie-san written at 3:40 in the morning of the 22nd, several more items, and a letter written on both sides of a single sheet by Makie-san. At almost every phrase, he lifted the hand with the beads and bowed his head.

This was especially the case when I read him Makie-san's



letter. The tears welled out of his eyes and he kept wiping them away with his handkerchief. My own voice trembled, and I could not keep back the tears myself. As I recall, the letter ran as follows:

Kunimasa is very healthy and pays his visits regularly to Manman-Chama [Grandma]. When asked whose good boy he is, he insists that he is mama's, papa's, grandma's, and grandpa's. I am keeping half of the chocolate bar you last gave me, Father, and intend to show it to him when he becomes old enough to understand things. The last piece of writing I received from you was a pencilled note:

I see a Buddha  
In the slumbering child  
Who knows not  
That it is farewell for me forever.

I am putting it away, thinking of how Kuni, when he grows up, will appreciate and yearn for you.

After I had finished reading, Tojo-san said very quietly, "Makie is a very unfortunate child. Please tell her to teach some religion to my grandchild. Man cannot tread the highway of life without religion. It is absolutely impossible to be satisfied with just floating on the surface of the current. But religion is hard for the young to take seriously, isn't it?"

"So," I replied, "the good Amida-Sama, in trying to succor those who could not become Buddhas themselves, became a Buddha. You, with your heart filled with thoughts of Makie-san who is most unfortunate, are like Him."

He smiled. "When my wife and four daughters came to

see me, I really prayed to them with my beads. They seemed so like Bodhisattvas."

"I believe your daughter will enjoy a happy life both materially and spiritually. Now may I ask if you are writing anything?"

"The pencil I have is so short and they give me so little paper, that it's impossible to write. But I am grateful for even this. It gives me a good chance to meditate on my beliefs. Over and above all other emotions, I feel gratitude. I want to go to my death in this frame of mind. It does not trouble me at all, for I feel that it is Buddha's messenger, or preparation, for me. I am thankful. I feel quite empty-handed, but I am enjoying and reading carefully everything you have given me, without worrying too much and with peace in my soul. The more I read, the deeper is my gratitude.

"It is deplorable that people today consider what Hozo \* Bodhisattva said and what Syaka \* preached as so many empty words. But the Forty-Eight Vows have been realized. Or take the theory that the teachings would go out to the ten corners of the world; this is actually proving true through radio. Science may advance and there is no telling how the world may change, but over thirty centuries ago these things were being written clearly in the Sutras. Reading the Sutra of the Trilogy and the Psalm of the True Faith, I can now realize what a strange mortal I was—and what a terrible sinner. I believe it is in the Third Vow that there somewhere occurs the statement that all people, equally, shall become Buddhas of gold. That is true democracy, isn't it? Tens of thousands of years hence, that is how things will be, I am sure. Buddha speaks like that, but how small this earth

\* See *Buddha* in Glossary.

of ours must be, viewed from His height, enthroned in the grandeur of nature, moving on from the earth to the moon and stars, and even to the sea of Infinity. It seems ridiculous to be talking about things dying and being born on this microscopic globe of ours. I am sure there is a Paradise. Maybe it is in the stars. Maybe in a separate world. And we can go there in no time at all. I believe we shall be able to communicate with that world in the future through the development of wireless. Yes, I can read the Scriptures no matter how many times, and they still have a blessed message for me."

I nodded. "In the Scriptures it says, 'the Sacred Words travel in ten directions,' but the news of your death, Tojo-san, will be heard all over the world, almost at once."

"It is in 'The Psalms to Buddha,' isn't it," I asked, "that something is said to the effect that 'the burning flames of the Sun, Moon, and Diadem \* of Our Lady will remain unseen and appear as though pitch black'? We are apt to think of the brightness of the sun as being far greater than that of the moon or a star, but it says here that even the bright glitter of the sun sh<sup>ll</sup> be hidden away."

"The Great Buddha at Nara is not called 'Great' simply because of its immense size." I said. It is merely an abbreviated way of saying 'The Great Kon-ro-sha-na Buddha of the Temple of Important Beginnings and Endings.' Let me explain. A Syaka † just like that appearing on this earth appeared in the world of the moon and of the stars. And finally a Great Sakya-Muni of the Universe was formed from ten billion of these lesser Syaka. And the Great Kon-ro-sha-na Buddha is conceived of as being the Great Teacher

\* See Glossary.

† Sanskrit *Sakya* becomes *Syaka* or *Shaka* in Japanese.

Buddha of a thousand of these Great Syaka-Munis. I will give you another illustration. We say that there are ten billion earths, moons, and stars, with a thousand solar systems assembled to form a greater solar system, the Nucleus of which is what we call the Great Kon-ro-sha-na Buddha. To symbolize this idea, the people of that time made the very biggest Buddha they could, and this image happened to be the Great Buddha of Nara. This Buddha was conceived on a *Weltanschauung* based on a way of thinking and a deep philosophy of life that I have explained; so that even the Emperor Shomu, the Empress Komyo, and the Emperor Koken knelt and struck their foreheads on the ground in reverence before it. In that gesture, the words they used—'Slave of the Three Treasures'—have their true import. Nobody nowadays knows or has been taught these things; so most people just go on thinking it is a big Buddha fifty-six feet and so many inches high, and so forth. They stand in terrible indifference with their hats on, exclaiming how big it is, and looking upon it as they would any other piece of art. No one seems to have understood the deep feeling of humility that made the Emperor Shomu prostrate himself on the earth."

"That must be true," Tojo-san replied. "I have felt exactly the same when reciting 'The Sutra of the Endless Life,' where the majesty of the various Boddhisattvas in Paradise is compared with that of our earthly rulers. It may sound disrespectful, but the rulers on this earth do appear very small to me. I was reading in 'The Sutra of the Seeking of the Endless Life' where it tells us the various ways of seeking Buddha. This is difficult, for the images we see of Him are so small, like the figure you have on this altar. I try to imagine a Great Buddha enthroned above a Greater Solar

System—a Kon-ro-sha-na Buddha, a Buddha covering hundreds of millions of acres; but I can't seem able to do it."

"Such Buddhas have been seen by people like Itu-Kifu, a man of the sublimest strata," I said. "And Saint Zendo of China, according to the account of Zendo Dokumyo Butsuhoi, was able to see this Buddha. He performed what is known as The Six Glorifications, where he saw Buddha, in the morning, at noon, in the afternoon, at dusk, in the middle of the night, and at break of day. This experience was passed on to Saint Honen of the Jodo sect and has become known as The Meeting at the Death Bed; but by the time of Saint Shinran the conception was lost. The new idea was that, through what is known as 'The Virtue of Fixity of Communion' (meaning that one is saved the very moment one believes), Buddha's hand is stretched down, and that because of this intervention the need for 'the meeting on the death-bed' does not occur. We call this newer idea 'Unison of Sight and Enlightenment,' and what Itu-Kifu saw with his eyes, we souls of lower strata gain the moment we know we are saved, once we chant the Sacred Name and pray. Toward the end of 'The Sutra of the Seeking of the Endless Life' there is a passage where the virtues of calling vocally on the Sacred Name are explained. That is what I have been talking about. There is one thing I feel I must ask you, though. If you do not tell me honestly why you tried to kill yourself, Tojo-san, I fear that the various false rumors going around will not be dispelled."

"Well," he replied, "the explanation boils down to this. All my life I had been teaching my subordinates, through the 'Code of the Battlefield,' never under any circumstances to let themselves be captured, but to choose death instead. I was merely practising what I preached. The others who were

arrested had received notice the day before, whereas in my case the Military Police came unexpectedly. So I did it at once. Yes, and I want my family to be told that I used the same Army pistol that Hidemasa [Makie's husband] had killed himself with, because I don't think anyone knows that. Only in my case, first-aid measures were taken immediately."

"Yet if you had died then," I said, "I feel that you would not have enjoyed the blessings of religion that are yours now."

"Yes, I agree with you," Tojo-san replied. "From a personal point of view, I am glad I didn't succeed, first because I have been able to bring religion into my life, second because I have learned to understand the beauty of human life as never before, and third because I was able to clear up certain points during the trial. In addition, I am extremely happy for the sake of my family that I have been able to disprove the scandalous allegation that I had received ten million yen—or was it twenty?—from the Mitsubishi's.\* This matter has been thoroughly investigated by the judicial authorities and I have been given a clean bill of health. For that I can go to my death happy."

Finally, asking me to interpret for him he turned to the officer handcuffed to his right hand and to the one on guard (both were captains), and said to them, "I want to have Hanayama-san with me until the very end. I believe that is a right of the condemned." I translated this, and the two officers nodded and said they would notify the office. After this, he prayed before the altar for a few moments, and gratefully bade me goodbye and left.

I told him on this occasion that Mrs. Tojo's movement to

\* One of the *Zaibatsu*, or great capitalist concerns of Japan.

collect signatures to petition the authorities to permit the families to claim the remains of their dead was not limited to the seven but was to apply to all other prisoners executed thereafter.

On this he commented, "Things like that don't matter too much." But he did seem quite uneasy over the possible treatment of the ashes; so I gave him the contents of General MacArthur's statement of the 24th. I think his feeling that the authorities were trying to "lash the dead" was eased somewhat.

The third meeting lasted for forty minutes, beginning at two o'clock in the afternoon of November 29th (Monday); as my readers will remember, I saw him with Muto-san on this occasion.

"Immediately after I met you last," he said, "I sent in a petition to the Colonel, making the request I told you about the other day: namely, (1) that we be given a sermon at the very end, and (2) that we have your attendance to the end."

"By attendance, you mean seeing you off, don't you?"

"I don't care what it is called, just so I can have you with me until the very end."

I told him about the meeting of the families which we were planning to hold after the execution, and he thanked me, adding that he was glad "we are to be killed here in Japan." It appeared that he had been thinking that they might be taken to some other country and humiliated there.

"Tojo-san, are your clothes American-made?"

He was wearing a long purple gown over what looked like working-clothes with an open collar. He also had on socks and clogs.

He looked down at himself. "These rags—. I only wish they'd at least give us something clean to wear. We Japanese usually change into clean clothes when we die, you know. Of course, we can't expect them to understand that. Still, death is sacred, and—" He lifted his left hand and showed me his wrist. The sleeves of his coat were so long that they had been pulled up and buttoned.

"It's probably because they don't understand the conditions," I said consolingly. "How about sending in a complaint? It can be done in Japanese, so why not try it? If you do they will give it serious consideration, and once they understand how you feel I think they will grant your request."

And I told him what had happened when the Buddhist altar was carried into this Chapel and how they had put the Buddhist altar in the place formerly occupied by the Christian. I also described the trouble they had gone to in my behalf when I had needed candles, flowers, and incense.

"I want to hand over these glasses and my dentures and my beads at the end, too," he said.

"I will make sure that I receive them, and I will deliver them to your family. Up to now, some men have died with their beads, while others have handed them to me after finishing their final prayers. Still others have given them to me on their way across the courtyard to the gallows, saying they wanted their wives to have them."

"That's what I want too. I wish they'd hurry and execute me. Then I would be free."

"Yes, yes. I'm thinking it won't be long now. They told me to see all seven of you today. So I met Doihara-san this morning and am seeing the rest of you in pairs this after-



noon. It may be tonight, but I really believe it will be tomorrow night. I understand that I am to stay here tonight."

"I am grateful for that. I hope I can see you again at the end. This isn't the finish, is it?"

"Of course not. I believe I shall be visiting you in your cells from now on. But this probably will be the last time we can meet in front of the altar."

"Is that so? Will this be the last time we can come before the Buddha?"

I could not answer this question, but I said, "At the end, I would like to have your signature for a memento, and intend to ask for——"

"Ask the authorities for it then as a personal favor to you."

"According to the way things have been carried out before, you will be notified of the execution twenty-four hours ahead of time. You will have plenty of time until then, so I would like to have some of your writings. Goodbye, then."

Tojo-san stepped before the altar, paid his last respects, and started to leave the room. When he reached the door I called out to him "take good care of himself."

"Thank you," he replied. "Goodbye."

And he turned again and went out.

The fourth meeting was from 1:30 to 2:40 in the afternoon of December 2nd (Thursday). He spoke of his deepening religious faith. He handed his hair and fingernail clippings over to the officer, and asked repeatedly that they be given to his family. I received them from the officer and gave them to Mrs. Tojo the next day.

"How are you?" I greeted him. "I thought that we should

not meet again in the Chapel. But it appears that just when matters came to the brink, an appeal to the American Supreme Court has been made and the execution postponed."

"I don't like this dillydallying. But the postponement makes me grateful for two things. For one thing, Buddha is telling me that my belief is not zealous enough; for another, my wife and daughters came to see me yesterday and I had a good talk with them. My wife is religious enough, but my daughters—. I don't blame them, they are so young and don't seem to understand. I spoke to them earnestly, emphasizing how important religion is. I am grateful for being allowed to do this."

"Having met your wife and Miss Kimie the other day, I invited them to my house and so was able to talk with them on various subjects for an hour and a half. Perhaps because of that, Kimie-san has written me that she had come to understand a little of what her father feels. I have spoken to Yukie-san for a few minutes on several occasions, but as I have not met your other daughters at all, I can't blame them overmuch. I saw your son Toshio-san at the University and had a few words with him, but have not met the others yet. Their attitude can be understood."

"Yes," he replied. "Yesterday when they visited me, I spoke to the children at length, but somehow they seem confused—especially the boys. You see, my mother's family are Buddhists of the Shinshu sect, while my father's are Shintoists. That's where the trouble arises. Personally, I prefer Buddhism as a religion. In my home we have always had both a Buddhist Altar and a Shinto God-Shelf. The children can't see the difference, and can't bear to forsake Shinto. Belief in the gods, they think, is respect for our ancestors, and the main line of our ancestors lies in the

Imperial House, from which have branched off all Japanese families."

"Yes, as you say, most people today are all mixed up."

"On the other hand," he went on, "Buddhism touches on the fundamental question of life itself, and considers that after that is understood, social problems will more or less settle themselves. I told my wife and daughters to tell the boys that."

"Yes, I see. Your daughters, having come to see you themselves, may understand your meaning to some extent, but your three boys have not been included in your list of visitors. Listening to religious talk through somebody else is not at all satisfactory."

Tojo-san grew emphatic.

"For myself, I don't consider Shinto a religion. In my opinion, its sole idea is to inculcate reverence for the origin of the nation and for the ancestors. This mistake is not confined to my own children. People in general are all mixed up. Girls are emotional and so they can understand once you tell them; but boys are rational, so it is only when they are led step by step that they can reach the blessings of Buddha.

"I am reading 'The Sutra of the Trilogy' together with 'The Psalm of the True Faith.' Yes, this is it." And taking out of his pocket an old book with tattered covers, he continued, "This is an interpretation rendered by Masazumi Ando. I just could not seem to catch the meaning of the text, but with this to help me I was able to get it clearly. I often used to meet Ando in the Imperial Diet, and I want you to tender him my gratitude for this book if you should meet him."

"I will certainly do that," I promised.

"It just so happened that this book was in the library here. It has a message for me no matter how many times I read it. 'The Sutra of the Endless Life' is really magnificent. 'The Forty-Eight Vows' stands out among the others and its every phrase is edifying. This book should be read by every man in the Government today, so that the people may receive a new life. It deals with fundamentals. Things like the United Nations and World Peace can be attained only when man has lost his avarice. Human greed is instinctive: the formation of nations comes from greed, and beautiful words talking about 'national existence,' 'self-defense,' and so on are simply expressions of the national greed which culminates in what is known as war. To do away with this greed, two prophets, Sakya-Muni in the East and Jesus Christ in the West, came into the world, and have striven for thousands of years to save the souls of men. Unfortunately, their creeds have not been practised, and with the passage of time things have degenerated. So I am convinced that statesmen and politicians could do themselves good by reading this book and thinking over its teachings. I am ashamed to say that I myself only discovered it here in Sugamo. The fact is that life cannot be seen objectively except from prison. Buddha is a Being so vast that It can neither be sculptured in wood nor painted in colors. But modern men do not know this. That shows how much our faith has changed from that of the past. We have become degenerate."

He carried on in this vein for quite some time.

"Oh, yes—another thing. About that piece of writing I gave you the other day. Those were the fundamentals, but since then I have gone a little more into detail. The first part consists of what I had left unsaid on public matters; the sec-

ond is more of what I wanted to tell my family. With respect to the public matters, I had intended to go to my death without saying anything more, but there were some things I worried about until I wrote them out in fuller detail. Please let Mr. Blewett and Mr. Kiyose \* read it too, before you give it to my family as a memento."

Then he reverted to religion and to how deeply he was reflecting nowadays on the truth of Buddhism.

I said, "Every time I see you, you have something edifying and blessed to tell me."

"Well, everything comes back to Buddha, you know." He suddenly smiled. "I felt terrible about this at first," he said, glancing at the hand chained to that of the officer beside him. "But this is good, too. When I raise my hand, he raises his, you see. This is one of the ties of Buddha. Thinking of the matter in that light, recently I have felt good about it. When I exercise, he walks with me too. It's all so glorifying."

"These words that you have just given me—" I said, "there's no telling, when passed on, how much they may help others."

"I am bearing up against thoughts of suicide and other things. I am trying to keep myself healthy by some means or other until the execution. I should hate to find myself unable to go down the stairs from my cell because of a cold or a fever, or too weak to climb up those last steps to the scaffold. To guard against such a possibility, I requested an extra bedcover, which I am thankful to say has been issued me.

"Practically all of us here in prison are Buddhists, and of the seven, Hirota-san alone is a Zen Buddhist. I cannot perform the rigorous rites of Zen, because I am only of common

\* His lawyers.

clay. I think I remember that even a remarkable priest like Saint Ryokan said the same thing. For me, 'salvation by faith' is enough.

How blessed I be,  
Even though of common clay,  
To know the salvation of Amida  
Is there, waiting for me.

"Enlightenment through self-power is, I am convinced, more than a man like me can ever attain.

"The *tanka* I've just quoted has a great appeal for me, and I am always reciting it. Here's another one I like and recite every morning, it makes me feel so good:

I can only rely  
On that Great Strength,  
Because, whilst I am of this world,  
I am like the mere grass of the field."

At this point, I seized the chance to preach a little sermon. I pointed out the opening and closing phrases of "The Psalm of the True Faith," and explained how they reinforced some of the points he had just made about the saving power of belief.

"A man like myself," I said, "is a commoner among commoners, a sinner among sinners. In the eyes of a true Buddha, I am the biggest of sinners. For instance, I eat meat, I eat rice; and there is life even in that rice. Simply considering what we eat, we are strange mortals who have to destroy life merely to live: we are the heaviest of sinners. Until one can understand that, one cannot sympathize with sinners.

"The other day I read in a book that the aborigines of

Siberia believe that even the trees and everything around them cry, breathe, cough, and live just like themselves. This is to view everything in the light of life itself. When one is about to be decapitated, neither 'The Sacred Faith' nor 'The Psalm of the True Faith' amount to anything at all. The only thing remaining is Namu-Amida-Butsu. There is nothing but Namu-Amida-Butsu left, when you are driven to the brink. Man must transcend life and death itself."

"That's very fine and good," Tojo-san exclaimed. "It's so refreshing, Doctor, to be talking to you. By the way, is there any restriction as to time?"

"We have as much time as is needed. Listening to your talk on matters like this makes me happy."

I told him that the decision of the Tribunal was to be made on the sixth and that sentence might be carried out on or about December 8th.

"Aren't they dragging it out to torment us?" he asked.

"No. Definitely not. I am sure there is nothing of the kind in General MacArthur's mind. Oh, yes. I have some telegrams which the officers here have asked me to read to you:

It must have been trying, but the gods are looking down  
from on high.—Kazu

"This one has been sent from the Takahashi Post Office, in Kumamoto Prefecture, and is marked 'urgent.'"

"I am afraid I don't know the sender, but I am deeply appreciative."

He bowed his head in thanks, raising his hand at the same time.

The gods will recognize your honesty.—Kameso Ohtani

"He's a Lieutenant-General. I know him."

Await the judgment of the gods and Buddha.

"This one has no name on it. It comes from the Gojo Post Office in Nara."

"Thank you."

"This one is addressed to you all. It is from a person named Meadows, is written in English, and comes from the Ishiwata Office. He probably is a Christian missionary. That's all."

"Will you please hand them over to my family? And Doctor—I hate to trouble you so, but can I see you again?"

"Certainly. I want to see you as often and as many times more as I can."

"Please as many times as possible."

"At the end, it seems I shan't be allowed to enter your cells, but will be permitted to speak to you from the corridor. I think I gave you General MacArthur's statement the other day. That appears to be the announcement given out twenty-four hours ahead of time. This time they may not call each man up before the Colonel to receive the announcement, as has been done heretofore."

"That will be hard, if they don't give us at least twenty-four hours. I have things to write, you know. It will be terrible if they pull me out of my sleep to kill me."

"How about petitioning them about that?"

"I have done so quite often, already."

"Well, the officers here look tired; so let me see you again some other time."

"Thank you so much for everything."



On December 3rd (Friday), I met Mrs. Tojo in the morning and received a letter from her for her husband.

On December 7th (Tuesday), Mrs. Tojo was at my home from nine in the morning until two-thirty. I gave her the contents of a letter he had read to me.

The fifth meeting was from 9:20 to 10:00, December 10th (Friday). He came in handcuffed to a single enlisted man, with only one officer guarding him—something that had not happened for a long time. It was quite a change from the tension of November 29th.

“Looks like it has been put off again, doesn’t it?” he began.

“Yes, it must be very trying. I met your wife on the morning of the 3rd and gave her the hair and the fingernail clippings.”

“Thank you very much.”

“And then three days ago your wife came to my house—” here Tojo-san bowed his head in acknowledgment “—and I read her everything in my notes of my recent visit to you.”

“Thanks so much for that. My will, by the way, is composed of two parts. The first concerns public matters; the second is private and addressed to my family. The public part concerns the Emperor and important political questions. The other day while meditating by myself, I suddenly realized that few people in this world had been as fortunate as I. For one thing, I was able to attain high position and high rank. For another, I have been given this chance to deepen my religious faith. For still another, I am free to say what I want, and so I added a little on military affairs. The part of my will relating to public matters, I put in an envelope and addressed to you. I want you three—Mr. Blewett, Mr. Kiyose, and yourself—to read

it. I wrote it for the information of understanding people. At first, I thought of addressing it to high officers of the American Army, but gave the idea up. The second part, about family matters, gives directions about the funeral and other things. It doesn't touch on anything of a public nature, but explains in full my attitude toward religion. I have also attempted to show my personal feelings in several *tanka*.

Nothing now  
Beclouds my soul,  
As with a full heart  
I start my journey West.

“Here is another one to my children, on the importance of faith:

Tarry not, my dears,  
To board the ship of glory,  
For under one great canopy  
We reach the distant shore.

“To my grandson, Kunimasa:

I hope to tell thy father,  
When I depart,  
How sweet thy little figure is,  
Waiting on thy mother.

“And on Buddha:

Like the flicker of fireflies  
Is the light of the Sun and the Moon,  
Before Thy radiance, O Buddha,  
Who brightenest my way!

"Please tell the children to take a good look at the inscription on the family tombstone when next they visit it. Let them do this, first that they may realize that sooner or later man, in his transiency, must die; and second that they may understand the religious poem carved on the back of it. This is a composition of their great-grandfather's, and though I have of course seen it indifferently many times, it is only now that I can grasp it:

How frightened I am  
To behold my shadow  
Lying large amid the frost  
Of the wintry night.

"In observing for the first time the frightening distortion of our own shadow, we can realize how warped our character and personality must appear to others—how warped, indeed, they really are. That's one meaning to be drawn from the poem."

"Oh, by the way, I have had an unexpected visit from Kwannon!" Seeing my startled look, he hurried on: "It happened this way. The other day I received this handkerchief"—pulling it out of his pocket—"Kwannon had taken this form and come to me. I thought it very mysterious."

At this point, I got actually worried, thinking that at last under the strain of waiting his mind had cracked up.

He laughed.

"I'm not joking, honestly. I don't mean to pull your leg, and of course the whole thing is only a coincidence, from a 'natural' point of view. But it isn't quite that simple, from mine in my present state. See the trade-mark—'Cannon'? In English, that means 'big gun,' doesn't it?" he asked the officer beside him. "But reading it in Japanese, it is 'Kwannon,' as

sure as I live. That means that the Goddess of Mercy has changed her appearance to come to me." And he smiled happily.

"Absolutely," I smiled back at him. "The spirit in which you accepted the handkerchief is blessed indeed. As it happens, I have just installed a figure of Kwannon here. Yesterday, in my absence, a middle-aged graduate of an art school came to my house with a Kwannon, saying that he had put all his soul into making a Kwannon that could be prayed to, and that he wanted it to be set up for the use of you seven men. Today I brought it here, and have just set it up."

"How wonderful. Let me pray to Kwannon."

He rose from his chair and drew closer. I took the beautifully carved figure from the altar and held it near his face. Tojo-san raised his one hand in prayer.

"My best wishes to you," he said as he left, and turning round at the door he nodded to me.

It was on this day that he said: "Tell my children for me to clasp their hands and chant 'Namu-Amida-Butsu,' whenever happiness comes to their hearts."

## CHAPTER VII

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ONE MINUTE AFTER MIDNIGHT,  
DECEMBER 23,

**DECEMBER 21** (Tuesday)—Some men from the press coming to wake me up early this morning, I set out for Sugamo with them. At the Liaison Office I received a letter that Mrs. Tojo had left there for me the day before, and with misgivings as to whether I should be able to return home that night, I entered the main gate of the prison.

Mac, the assistant, notified me that Doihara-san was waiting to see me, and so I made myself ready. But then I received word from Captain Broome to the effect that all the American officers would be busy all morning, and that Christian services would be held in the afternoon, so to please wait in the office.

It was rather trying and I spent the hours looking at the pictures in the papers and reading the letters Tojo-san, Kimura-san, and Matsui-san had entrusted to me. At shortly after four in the afternoon, I was called to Captain Broome's office and asked to remain overnight.

I was told that I would be in attendance at the notification of execution, and that I could be with the men from five o'clock the next afternoon, after the announcement, until the execution was carried out. I was asked to find out whether the men wanted to see me before five o'clock.

I moved into the familiar room, No. 36. Supper was brought to me there. Evidently it was desired to keep my presence a secret from the prisoners generally. The Chaplains' office was to serve as the pronouncement chamber. In the belief that it would be the last of my work at Sugamo, I promised to spend an hour with each man, besides holding the final service. As I returned to Room 36, my watch showed a little after ten o'clock. I took a shower and then made out my record of the day's happenings.

(1)

*The Pronouncement of Execution is Delivered*

In the Chaplains' office, four of us—Colonel Morris C. Handwerk, Commandant of the Prison, his adjutant (a captain), the interpreter Sugino, and I—were seated in the front row, while behind us stood a major and Chaplain Walsh. Under the direction of Captain Broome, four or five officers took turns in bringing in, in alphabetical order, the seven men. Doihara and Hirota, Itagaki and Kimura, Matsui and Muto, and finally Tojo—all came in in four groups. Each man was handcuffed to an officer with another officer on guard.

The announcement was made to each group:

“ . . . The execution will take place at 00:01 December 23, at Sugamo Prison.”

After which each man was asked whether he had any request to make, and was told that the Chaplain and the Buddhist Priest, Hanayama, would be in attendance from five o'clock the next afternoon until the time of execution.

Doihara-san, the first man to come in, said he had a letter he wished to give me, but was told that the letter would be

delivered after censoring. As for the visit tomorrow afternoon, he said he would appreciate it if he could have an hour. Hirota-san made the same request. Hirota-san appeared to have become a little thinner, and he seemed at first unable to grasp exactly when the execution would be carried out. I told him it would be at midnight tomorrow. Each man had on American Army work clothes with "P's" stamped on them, and wore socks and wooden clogs. Neither of them wore belts. On leaving the room, each man was weighed.

Next, Itagaki-san and Kimura-san were led in. Itagaki-san made it clear that he understood everything and said that he would like to have one hour with me before five o'clock.

Kimura-san asked me to transmit his will to his family. Upon this, the Colonel said that it would be given to me after censoring by Captain Broome, but that oral transmission was permissible.

Matsui-san and Muto-san came in next—Matsui-san with three letters for me to deliver. I told him to keep the letters until I visited his cell tomorrow. I noticed that he was wearing his prayer-beads on his wrist.

Muto-san wore the familiar gown of reddish purple, with a small "U.S." on the breast. This was the gown he usually wore when it was chilly. He was wearing it now, it seemed, because he had a slight cold. He wore clogs and had his beads with him, like the others.

Tojo-san, who came in last, wore his beads as usual, but I noticed that the tassel was gone. [The American prison authorities took special care that Tojo should not have any cord in his possession, for fear that he might make another attempt to commit suicide.] He nodded at each word of the pronouncement, and after it was over he raised the hand with the

beads and said, "O.K., O.K.," several times, bowing deeply. I felt that he wanted to show that he understood everything, and that he was grateful. Asked if he had any requests, Tojo-san, alone, came out clearly and said, "About two or three weeks ago, on two occasions, I sent in a petition to the Colonel. It was addressed to the authorities and was itemized. Practically everything listed therein has been granted, and I wish to tender you my thanks and appreciation." He raised the same hand again and bowed his head.

The five items, as I recall them, concerned personal matters, such as a request for medicine which would enable him to sleep at night. Two other requests were that before the execution he desired a religious talk of two or three hours by Hanayama-san, since he understood that the authorities believed in freedom of religion and all seven condemned men were Buddhists: and that he wanted me to be with him at the end.

Mr. Tojo went on speaking:

"Your precautionary measures are too strict. We will never try to kill ourselves. We will show you that we can die noble deaths. For example, you guard us at all times, even when we use the latrine, and this to a Japanese is an unbearable thing. I am sure that if you were treated this way, you would understand.

"Another matter, though trivial. We should like to have at least one Japanese meal. We are Japanese, after all. Anything—even *sushi* [chopped pickles, etc. wrapped in cold rice]—will do. And we should like to have at least one drink of *sake*.

"The families of most of my colleagues here in prison are living in wretched conditions. Unlike American officers we are poor, and I should like to have some measure taken to



enable our families to live. For instance, would it not be possible to turn over to their families the wages of the officers for the work done here every day?"

To this, the Colonel answered, "Your first and last requests are out of my power to grant. I am only following the orders of my superiors."

"That's all I have to say," Tojo said as he left. I followed him to the door and told him I'd see him the next day.

By ten o'clock the pronouncement was over and I returned to No. 36. Sugino, who had been doing the translating, occupied the next room with Captain Broome. It was a sleepless night for me.

At seven o'clock next morning—December 22nd, Wednesday—I was listening to the news as it came in over the radio. It was reported that the entire text of the Supreme Court's rejection of the appeal had arrived at General MacArthur's Headquarters.

From nine o'clock, in the Chapel as usual, I began meeting the seven men.

(2)

*The Sun Looks Out on a Winter Day*

I saw Koki Hirota, from nine to ten. He bowed to the altar as usual and sat down.

"Good morning. Did you have a good night's sleep?"

"Well——"

"I was intending to see you last week," I went on, "and put in a request, but could not make it because there were no officers free. I am grateful that I can see you all twice today—the second time being from seven until twelve o'clock to-

night. Right now I have been allowed one hour and am ready to listen to whatever you have to say. Are you getting any newspapers?"

"No papers are coming in at all, and we know nothing about what is going on." He asked about the American Supreme Court, so I told him that the appeals had been denied by a six-to-one vote.

"The matter had been decided by the Allied Powers already, so—" he said.

I continued. "The execution, I'm afraid, will surely take place tomorrow—that is, today just after midnight. But I am meeting your children at Matsui-san's home and I think I can transmit anything you might have to say or want done."

"As you see, I am in splendid health. I have nothing to say, but simply tell them that I went to my death in good health and in silence."

"Yes, I understand—but the others have written *tanka* and other poems, and I was wondering if you had anything?"

"Early in my youth I gave up things like belles-lettres, and as an official put all my efforts in my work at the office. I do read others' poems, but have given up making any of my own."

"Wouldn't it be better, for the sake of the children at least, to leave something like that?"

"As I say, I have long since cut out everything in the line of self-improvement, and so—. The things I have managed to do have been my whole life."

"Then if I note down this conversation between us, I believe I can transmit it to your children."

"Yes, yes."

"I understand that your family graves are in Hakata?"

"Well, I am not sure. As you know, my people are stone-cutters and so—. I don't know where they have buried my wife. My brother has taken over the family business. He came to see me here the other day."

"Wasn't it on the first of this month?"

"On the last day of last month. It so happened that I notified him about the visiting regulations, and the train got to Tokyo just in time. I am quite happy about it."

"How old is he?"

"Sixty-six or seven. He may be younger than that, though. He is the next brother to the next below me."

"How many brothers and sisters did you have?"

"There were four boys; two of them died. I had a younger sister, too, but she is dead. This brother is the only one left."

"When did you lose your parents? When you were still young?"

"No, no. Mother died at eighty while I was stationed in Holland. Father died just about the time the War ended."

"You have about twenty years to go, to reach your father's age, haven't you?"

He laughed. "Ha ha-ha, I'm still the young one!"

"That means they are waiting for you over there."

"Yes."

"You know, the people outside take a great interest in you. Even now I get lots of letters at my place. You were a civilian, and so appeals were sent up to General MacArthur and to the Supreme Court. Though they were rejected I feel sure that public sentiment will turn even more towards your children."

"Yes." He bowed his head.

"In a letter I recently received from a relative of one of the men executed in this prison occurs the statement that the lives

of Saigo's and Yoshida's surviving families were most miserable when compared with their own. So you are fortunate."

"Yes." He bowed his head again.

"Have you sent out any letters from here?"

"I have just finished one. I hope they send it. I saved some of my hair when I last had it cut and put it in an envelope today. They will, I hope, get around to sending it off in time."

"Who cut your hair for you?"

"One of the American officers. It was quite a while ago, shortly before the appeal to the Supreme Court was sent in."

"By the way, I handed over to your family what you gave me before."

"Is that so? I thank you so much. It was after that that my hair was cut."

"You are the only one with long hair, aren't you. The others, being soldiers, all have theirs clipped short."

He smiled at this. "Yes, it's as you say."

"Your hair is nicely brushed this morning."

"Yes, I brushed it with some rags." He put his hand to his hair and patted it.

"You look very healthy this morning."

"Yes."

"I will visit you in your cell later today and will then receive any word or letters you may have for your children. I am sure that whatever you write will reach your family, but it must be censored and that will take time. So if you can tell me, when I see you, what is written in them, I can pass it on and thus help lighten your burden."

"Very well. I will write something when I get back to my cell."

I looked at my watch and told him that a few minutes of our hour was left.

"What do the papers say nowadays about conditions in China?" he asked.

"That the power of the Chinese Reds is growing and that the Yangtze-Kiang area is in danger. There is some talk about Peiping being handed over to them soon, too."

"Yes, yes—what we most feared has come to pass."

"I've heard that shortly before the war ended you attempted to bring about a conference with Soviet Russia. It would have been good if you had succeeded, wouldn't it?"

"We acted too late. We should have begun negotiating earlier; only the Government dillydallied so much."

"Did you have any specially friendly contacts with Chiang Kai-shek?"

"No, not to speak of. I did get letters from him from time to time. because my diplomatic ties with China were mainly through my negotiations with him. I know him quite well. I can't say as to his feeling about me now, but I do not think particularly ill of him. I feel that the international situation being what it is, and the relations between the Allied Powers being what they are, each country has its own point of view and— —"

He went on talking in this vein for some time, ending with the comment: "And so China has come to its present pass."

"Did you spend much time in China?"

"My longest period of service was in England for four years. Then came my three years in America, my three years in China, my three years in Holland, and my two and a half years in Russia."

"In the future it will not be possible for a diplomat to make the rounds of all the leading Powers like that, will it?"

"Oh, no." And then, after a pause: "There is a great current running in this human world of ours, and unless you watch it carefully and constantly, you will be swept away. If mankind had kept a close eye on the real facts underlying the actions of Russia, we might have been able to avoid World War II."

"Actually, we Japanese think only of what America is doing."

"America is a nation that follows a normal course and method. Russia is a nation that rides the tremendous changes in society. The greatest problem, in the future, I believe, will be that of learning accurately how world trends move and shift, as Russia will be the core of these changes."

"I greatly appreciate your explaining to me in this our next to the last meeting the basic ideas governing your whole career."

"No, no," he said deprecatingly. "We can only wait to see the trends of the world in the future, before we can say whether I have been a good interpreter of these things. There is a crying need for a place in Japan where one can study these world-shifts calmly. In these turbulent times the men who are really thinking about these things are few."

"Excuse me, Hirota-san, but our time is up. I will be in to see you again about seven o'clock. Until then, good health."

*AKIRA MUTO. FROM 10:10 TO 10:50*

He was wearing the usual purple gown.

"How is your cold coming along?"

"I am much better, although still a little hoarse. It's because the air here is so dry. Hanayama-san, this isn't our last meeting, is it?"

"No, from seven until twelve o'clock I am going to visit the cells. But this will be the last in the Chapel."

I told him, at this point, about my being unable to meet him earlier because of the shortage of officers available, about my arrangement to meet his family at Matsui san's home day after tomorrow, and about the decision of the American Supreme Court.

Then he said: "The other day when I met you, I spoke of a *tanka* of mine. I told you it was the fifth, but it happens to be the sixth. As regards the 'Comings and Goings at Sugamo,' it may be a little silly of me but I've written it down, together with a short letter to you. Also a short note expressing my feelings, with twelve or thirteen *tanka* and about twenty-five *haiku*."

"Everybody seems to be composing *tanka*, don't they?"

"I have never attempted a *tanka* before, but somehow I don't seem able to express my full meaning in *haiku*."

"You know, worldly passions so overcome you when you are waiting for death. But last night after hearing the pronouncement of execution, I felt rather at peace and rested quite well. It was really like something that concerned another man. I believe I can die easily, this time. To confess to you frankly, I have tried this and that, but somehow it always turned out that 'the way was far, and the boat leaky.' And then, all at once, my whole life passed before me in one flash. I couldn't say logically whether there is a Buddha or not, but the entire matter seemed summed up in His Holy Name: Namu-Amida-Butsu. That is what is called 'communion with Buddha,' isn't it? I have written a piece on what I am feeling. I am grateful for the Buddhist name you gave me. I have had no real knowledge of the matter until

now, but now I am reading the Scriptures constantly and learning to live up to my Buddhist name. Here are two of my *tanka*:

How beautiful it grows  
And how great, the splendor  
Of that Buddhist Name  
Which was bestowed on me.

Amid the darkness of these prison walls,  
And of this world, can I see  
So dimly and so far  
The Glory of that Other Land.

"That's just about what I feel. I have also written some *tanka* and some *haiku* on 'The Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.' This book and 'The Fundamentals of Buddhism' have become quite soiled, but I wouldn't like to have them taken away from me. I don't ask for any special consideration to be shown my other books. Tojo-san has sent one copy of 'The Interpretations of the Holy Scriptures' to his home. Itagaki-san has also requested that his be given to his family.

"Are the 'Sutra of the Three Promises' and the 'Sutra of the Double Promises' different things?" he asked.

"They are the same," I explained. "We call it the 'Sutra of the Three Promises' because there are three promises in it; and because it seems to double the promises in the 'Forty-eight Vows,' it is sometimes called the 'Sutra of the Double Promises.' "

"Is that so? By the way, who wrote 'Lectures on Training in Austerity'?"

"It is said that a layman called Seiran Ouchi wrote it,



basing his teaching on ideas he obtained from various other people in the early days of the Meiji Era."

"Oh, I see. That means that it differs a little from the Shinshu Sect, doesn't it?"

"Yes. I included in *The Fundamentals of Buddhism* things like 'Lectures on Training in Austerity,' 'Sutra of Kwannon,' 'Sutra of the Spirit of Hanya,' and 'The Letter of Vows' so that it could be used by any of the Buddhist sects. By the way, are you getting your mail?"

"No, nothing has come from my family, although I have written at least four or five times myself. According to what members of my family told me when they visited me the other day, they had written me about the men from the press and about the change in their attitude towards us."

"I am intending to put in short book-form the feelings of you men—in the sense that you are teaching us the way to eternal peace. It will be titled 'The Discovery of Peace.' [The title of the Japanese original of this book.]—How is your wife taking things, if I may ask?"

"My wife is the extremely shy type. She's just a school-girl who has grown old but never grown up. I hope you will give her advice, bearing that fact in mind. She even tried to get out of joining the National Women's Defense Association, and I was at my wits' end. She would often decline an invitation from a Minister of State and be misunderstood in consequence. Because of her shyness, she seldom leaves the house. I guess she has spent too much time on me."

"All right, then. I'll be seeing you again from seven o'clock."

As he was leaving, I called out my blessing to his back. He turned around and thanked me and then went out."

*IWANE MATSUI. FROM 11:00 UNTIL 11:50 O'CLOCK*

He asked about the Supreme Court, and on my explaining the matter to him he said:

"I felt it would come out that way.—Did you receive that poor *tanka* of mine the other day?"

"Yes, I received it. I also showed it to your wife. She copied it and took it with her."

"It must be hard on you, Doctor, taking care of so many people."

"Oh, no, I am just trying to do what I can."

I read him the letters from his wife and Hisae-san at this point. He sat immovable, drinking in every word.

Then he spoke about as follows:

"Many years ago there was a man named Sei Arao hailing from my province. This fellow left the Army when he was a lieutenant and went into the export-import business, but later he developed the Toa-Dobun Association. He came under the influence of men like Kawakami-san and experienced various ups and downs with the Chinese patriots. At the time of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, he served as an interpreter and trained many Japanese. He was killed when about thirty-two or three in Formosa. Now, this man being from my province attracted me, and as soon as I entered the Army I came to follow in his footsteps. Greatly interested in China, I began studying continental problems and received instruction from such men as Kawakami, Fukushima, Aoki and Utsunomiya. In these men there was nothing of the cut-throat or highwayman type such as has developed in the Army recently, with the rise of militarism. These fathers of the Japanese Army, living up to all that could be expected of them, were really filled with the spirit of the Emperor Meiji. Later, the whole nation underwent a change,

and I believe that it was the young ones, acting impetuously and without restraint, who finally brought everything to the present pass.

"By the way, I see in the papers that it is believed that the Chinese vice-president, Li Tsung Jin, will succeed Chiang Kai-shek. I know this man personally. He is an upright, straight man and has the esteem of the people behind him. I felt that should Chiang go into retirement Li would take over, and that it was most likely he would arrive at some sort of compromise with the Communists. In his own thinking he is the absolute antithesis of a Communist, and more Japanese than anything else. He has the confidence of the Chinese people and is the ideal man to represent the Nationalist Party and join hands with the Communists. I realize how bad things are with China, but I believe the Communist doctrine now being preached in China differs greatly from that of Russia. I believe that with the addition of the Chinese moral touch, and some political arrangement between the two parties, they can manage. Only there doesn't seem to be any man of much stature over there nowadays."

"Is that so? Does the Communist Party in China differ so greatly from that of Russia?"

"Yes, it is different. What the Communists are doing is to take up all the land and redistribute it among the people. But the manner in which this is carried out is far more moderate than in Russia. The instinct of individualism is deeply rooted in the Chinese, and my chief reason for hope is that both Nationalists and Communists are acting for the individual. Chiang Kai-shek during that first year after he took Nanking managed quite well—but ideas and spiritual thought are the things that give real guidance. And here the priesthood comes in, with the ties of Buddhism to help out.

This is not China's concern alone, either. It has become a problem here in Japan too, don't you agree?"

He then talked of the origins and history of the Praying Kwannon on Izuyama, after finishing which he put on his over-gown and went out. It was his habit whenever he came into the Chapel to take this gown off, and to put it on again when leaving. He was free and easy, albeit a pious believer in Kwannon. He believed with great conviction in spreading this faith of his among all the peoples of Asia.

*SEISHIRO ITAGAKI. FROM 1:10 TO 2:00 O'CLOCK*

He said: "They told us that the final rites would be Christian."

I put him at ease by assuring him that they would be Buddhist.

"I have nothing to give my family except that little red book"—the *Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures*. "Could that be arranged?"

He went on, "I have written several letters, so I don't think anything else is needed. But after my death you may have occasion to make public the last things I said."

I nodded. "Tomorrow, after I leave this place, I have an appointment to meet certain members of the Japanese and foreign press, and I think I can transmit whatever you might wish."

"Well then, let me tell you my thoughts. As for the Declaration of Potsdam, I consider that we are sacrifices on the Altar of a Lasting Peace. In the words of Saint Nichiren, our throwing away our ugly physical beings for eternal peace means the turning of our common clay to gold—and so I can die content. As a Japanese, I will watch over the nation forever. I sincerely pray that our country may attain a speedy

peace with other nations, complete its own rehabilitation, and contribute to a world-wide peace. I also pray for the prosperity of the Republics of China and Korea. And finally I want to express to the authorities of Sugamo Prison my appreciation for the good care they have taken of us for so many months.

"That just about sums up what I wish to say, but I want your advice as to whether it is all quite proper."

"I think everything you've said is quite appropriate."

"Then, as a part of my will to my children, I have written the following:

Father will bide nigh thee,  
When thy sincere efforts  
Are put forth  
For the nation.

"And then by way of apology on my part:

On bended knee  
I bow to pray  
And beg Thy pardon for my sins,  
Before the Altar of the Gods.

"For years I have advocated a League of East Asia, and I have friends here and there.

Keep in mind, my friends,  
My friends of the Land of Kara [China],  
That even now there is but one,  
One East Asia.

"In the future, even after I voyage to that nether land, if it so happens that I am permitted to guard and watch over East Asia, I will consistently pursue that same doctrine.

"Another thing. Because of the appeals sent up to the

Supreme Court, our execution has been postponed—you might almost say prolonged—and it seems to us as though our lives were being inched away. I don't know how to express it, but I have written a *tanka* on the matter:

Awaiting execution  
Each morn, each night,  
Not for a moment can I forsake  
Living as a man,  
The true way for a man.

“This true way for a man comes to mean the way of Buddha.

“Another thing I must tell you is that I spent about three days reading what Justice Pal of India said in his dissenting opinion at the Tribunal, and that I was deeply impressed.

“Last summer I received permission to read a translation of the autobiography of Gandhi and found him very outspoken. He says that even when in London he spent his free time in devotional training. He endeavored to resist the desires of the flesh and tried to keep from living with his wife. He was faithful in the pursuit of the truth, and thorough-going in everything he did. His wife, too, was a great woman. And that spirit still exists there in India. I have composed a couple of *tanka* on what I felt when reading this book:

Most precious of all  
Was this one volume,  
In those two years  
Of trial in court.

How like unto a precious light,  
Brightening this dark world, is to me  
This writing that I read  
Of a noble man.

"And there is one that I've written to express—what shall I say?—my state of mind:

The floating clouds of my life  
Are scattered, to reveal  
The true moon in all its purity,  
And happy I am to view it.

"I want this put into the same wrapping with that little red book and given to my family.

"Do you remember those first two letters I wrote you, Doctor? In the first, I wrote that after the final world war would come the age of religion, and then the significance of Japan's renouncing war would be understood. It may all be a dream, though."

"But men must have dreams, you know," I tried to console him.

"Well, yes," he went on. "And if religion, or shall I call it the Truth, is something that remains changeless with the ages, another Nichiren or Shinran should appear in this world. But that is really out of my sphere, and I was hoping you would have something to give me on that subject. That's about all my first letter had to say. In my second, I expressed my longing to go to the bosom of Sakya Muni as soon as possible, seeing that I have ties with the Holy Relics of Buddha.

"I really am deeply indebted to you, Doctor. These letters are addressed to you, Doctor Hanayama, and though they are written in a poor hand in pencil and may be difficult to read, please accept them."

"Thank you very much."

"What about the Supreme Court?" he then asked.

I told him that at two o'clock in the morning of the twenty-

first a special announcement had been made—the appeals were denied by a six-to-one vote.

“That’s considerate, isn’t it. Last night I really felt myself at peace. I am grateful that America was thinking about us until the end.”

After talking on recent conditions in China for a while, he showed me another *tanka*:

Although I deem myself  
Lost and forsaken,  
Yet does it bring joy and cheer to my heart  
—A letter from outside.

He explained that this was because he had had so many warm, friendly ties with the outside world.

And then we discussed things like the European problems and the Berlin question for a while.

“So that’s the way it is,” he said smiling. “I will take the thought with me as a memento and develop it in that other land.”

“Yes, so it is, and so be it,” I replied. “Then I will be seeing you tonight from seven o’clock in your cells. This will be the last time here in the Chapel. Please take good care of yourself.”

“Thank you.”

He clasped his hands in prayer, bowed low to the altar, and left.

*HEITARO KIMURA. FROM 2:00 UNTIL 2:50 IN THE  
AFTERNOON*

“I have written five or six letters home since the verdict was given. Letters go out every Tuesday. With them I have sent several *tanka*, and have put down a few memories. I told



them about my parents, about my youth, and other things that my children may not know. My own writings would not amount to much, so I added the names of people with whom I have had close connections since my Army Prep School days, because I felt that if my children collected things to remember me by from these people, it would help a little. And then I sent my will to them, but I'm not sure it will reach them. I have rewritten it and have it with me now and wonder if you couldn't give it to my family?"

I told him that after censoring I thought I should be able to deliver it to them, but that if he would give me the main points of it now I could deliver them to his people sooner.

He went on:

"A letter from one of my children came to me in this photostatic copy. The paper is so good that I have used the back of it to write on. I wrote because I felt that they would want to have some of my own writing as a keepsake."

"Haven't you written any *tanka*?"

"Yes. This one:

My body as a sacrifice  
To a lasting peace I offer.  
And may I receive seven other lives  
With which to serve the nation.

"That is the only one I have composed. But let me read a little of what I have written in my letter to my daughter, Yuriko."

The following are some of the excerpts I copied from it:

"Don't ever think they'll be yours for all time: your parents and your money. Don't think they'll never be yours: bad luck and misfortune. I want you, Yuriko, to be the center

of cheery, beautiful smiles at home; and beginning the first thing in the morning I want you to bring in spring breezes with you and make everything cheery. Love will defeat anything. Respect will keep order; courtesy is the bouquet that beautifies the world; and Faith is strength. Even though you be poor in things be wealthy in heart. Grumbling will bring on the clouds; gratitude will clear them away. Everything depends on how you look at it. Your heart is what is precious. The foundations of a nation lie in each individual family; the foundations of the family, in the woman. To put your house in order, begin with your sewing kit, then think of the house-members, and finally of the house itself. Thus will your soul be in order and your life be pure. The entire universe is your classroom; everything under the sun is the object of your studies. Not once in your life must you forgo the chance for self-improvement. I want you to live in harmony with your mother as your center. Live strong and straight. Let each of you fulfill his duties and put forth his best efforts for the nation. One good deed done today is worth ten tomorrow. Each night, before going to bed, always reflect on the day's happenings, with a constant effort for self-improvement. And I want you to see to it that each day is spent in gratitude. This is my will for Yuriko."

"This will be a source of great happiness to her," I told him. "And when she marries, she will take it with her as a treasure."

He also read me his letters to his son Taro-san and to his wife. I transmitted them later.

"Now with reference to 'Essays on How to Enjoy the True Way,' " he concluded, "I would like to have one item read each night to the children, and have them memorize it and use it for self-improvement. The three of them can study

it and put it to use for self-reflection. Please give the book to my family."

KENJI DOIHARA. FROM 3:00 UNTIL 3:50 O'CLOCK P.M.

"Did you have a good night's sleep?"

"Yes. I am quite rested. The trouble is they wake you up again when you are fast asleep. There is something I have brought you."

"If you please."

"It's a *tanka*:

Once I step out on it,  
The narrow lane broadens.  
And so it is, I am assured,  
With the White Road between the Two Rivers.

"This follows the parable of the 'White Lane between Two Rivers' of Saint Tendo," he explained. "The Saint indicates that the width of 'the White Lane' is only four or five inches, and because Greed and Anger in man are so fierce and intense, they are compared to the two rivers of Fire and Flood; and then, because the Good in the heart of man is so weak, it has been compared to a White Lane. Our great Saint Shinran has explained this as follows: The White Lane is the highway to the highest Paradise. The Lane becomes wide through Faith (man is saved by Faith alone), and the Good in man is weak only because it is covered and hidden under Greed and Anger. Really, the Lane is never so narrow, and it seems only four or five inches wide because the soul rises from the Four or Five Abysses. My own experience tells me the same thing in walking a horizontal bar. While practising gymnastics we would look at the bar and hesitate, it seemed so narrow; but if we would fix our

gaze at the end and move straight along, it would be no different from walking on a highway. Or during the war, when I was ordered to make a night attack or when I had myself given orders for one, I would be all a-tremble. But once the attack was begun, I would forget my fears. In the same way, if one is constrained to obey the Sacred Order of Jin Juppo Mugeko Nyorai and enters into communion with Namu-Amida-Butsu, as a thirsty man seeks for water, he will be taken up into the Holy Realm of Believers through the work of Amida-Butsu, and the White Lane will revert to its pure original state of being a broad highway again. This means that a man of common clay can, without forsaking this earthly world, be saved by a miraculous power. That is how I understand the parable. Am I correct?"

"Quite."

"My writing about it may be a little difficult; so please explain what is necessary to my children, won't you?"

I told him I would.

Then he turned to his poems.

"This is something I felt on the 9th:

I endure, in reverence,  
The many trials that make it possible  
To find a great light  
Illuminating my darkness.

"This is what I felt when I read 'The Career and Teachings and Practise' of Saint Shinran.

"Another *tanka* written on December 15th:

Ne'er did I imagine  
How much longer  
I should live,  
To proclaim the Holy Name.

“On December 16th:

Far over the troubled waters  
Of life and death have I come,  
To repose  
In the ecstasy of Buddha.

“On December 17th:

Many people advise me to die splendidly,  
But by the Grace of Buddha  
I am satisfied merely to die,  
Humbly repeating His Holy Name.

“In this, I intended to express the saving power of Buddha.  
We do not go through our own efforts, but are allowed to go  
by the Grace of Buddha.

“And on December 19th:

Just because the stream of life  
Flows through me still,  
Today and yesterday I feel  
Those chilly winds entering me.

“On December 20th:

How dreary and dark my sins I feel,  
As my eye gains light to see  
The picture of this my land  
In desolation and ruin.”

Here I interrupted to ask him from where he had seen things “in desolation and ruin.” He answered that he had seen them from a window on the stairway leading from his cell to the Chapel.

He continued: “This is one I wrote on seeing the smoke belching from a chimney during my hour of exercise:

To Paradise must all things go,  
For even the smoke  
Is shifting to the West,  
And drifts in the soft quietness.

“And this is what I wrote on the night of the twenty-first, after being told that the execution would take place after midnight on the twenty-third:

Nor does Death’s coming  
Cause me shock,  
For I have been set  
And made ready for him.

“On the previous occasion, when I thought the time had come, I was quite disturbed, but now I wasn’t troubled at all:

For me everything has ended,  
And now fare thee well—  
Farewell to all, and let me say  
A fond goodbye.

My soul may it go  
And climb the Heavens.  
And for thousands of years  
May it guard and protect  
The realm of His Majesty.

Happy must I be  
For the summons to go;  
For hasn’t there been from days of yore  
The story of Furuna,\* to teach me the way?

“These are all the *tanka* I have written. After that I have only Namu-Amida-Butsu to say.”

\* See Glossary.

"Of all you seven men," I said, "you and Tojo-san have undergone the greatest change."

He bowed his head. "I am leaving behind only my dentures, my glasses, and my copy of the 'Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.' This book is the most important, and because I've written down so much in the pages I hope it won't be confiscated. To my home I have written five letters, the last being dated on the twenty-first. Tell my people not to grieve too much for me. Tell them that I myself was absolutely without worry, but cheerful. Tell them that I am feeling—with Buddha's help—almost as though the death awaiting me at twelve tonight were someone else's affair, and as though there were no difference between life and death. By the way, my ideas on the 'White Lane between the Two Rivers' are surely right?"

"Quite." And I went over the finer points of the parable for him again.

"I wish to let my children know that I was able to attain this religious ecstasy through being given the death-sentence, and I want your help in this."

"Very well."

He said his goodbyes in high spirits and left the room.

*HIDEKI TOJO. FROM 4:00 UNTIL 4:50 IN THE AFTERNOON  
OF DECEMBER 22ND*

He entered the Chapel wreathed in smiles, and clasped his hands and bowed to the altar.

"It is Buddha's summons," he began, "and I am grateful for it. Happily the sentence wasn't carried out unexpectedly and they gave us twenty-four hours' grace. And by the way, I failed to thank the Colonel for it last night. I hope you will do so for me, Doctor, and give him by best regards."

Then I read him two letters from his wife, and after thanking me he said: "Please take care of my personal effects and my will. Take care of my pictures—i.e., the photostats of the letters that have come from outside—my dentures, my glasses, and tell my wife the details of what took place at the last—at the execution. I have written some *tanka* to her:

Fare thee well, my dear,  
 For today I go, to cross  
 The hills of worldly worries,  
 To find happy repose in Buddha's bosom.

Tomorrow shall see me  
 In Amida's bosom resting,  
 Free from all care  
 And diffidence before others.

"They have a hundred-watt light burning in my cell day and night, and it's a wonder that I haven't had a nervous breakdown. Probably it was only my faith that saved me.

Though I depart,  
 Would that I might return to this land of mine,  
 For there remains so much to do  
 For my country.

"This means that I want to come back as a Buddha. It is *gen-soh-ekoh* [I will return as a Buddha]. When I was exercising the other day, I heard someone playing a *shakuhachi* [bamboo flute]:

The notes of the shakuhachi  
 Trill like those of the Bupposo [broad-billed roller],  
 But to my ears it sounds  
 Like the summons of Amida-Butsu.



"My father died on the twenty-sixth of December, my father-in-law on the twenty-ninth of December, and now I go on the twenty-third. It's really quite a coincidence, isn't it?

The autumn day is dying,  
And I can hear a voice calling,  
On this, the anniversary of Father's death."

"Did you say 'autumn'?" I queried at this point.

"I had to make it autumn; otherwise it would not make a good *haiku*.

Not a cloud is there to cross  
And darken my mind.  
And with a full heart  
I hurry on my journey West.

"This is an old one of mine. You know I am dying at a very opportune time. For one thing, I can tender my apologies to the people. Next, I am able to offer myself as a sacrifice to peace and become one stone in the foundation for the rebuilding of Japan. Thirdly, I can die in peace of mind because no trouble was brought upon the Emperor. Fourth, is the fact that I can die on the gallows—my death would have had no meaning if it had come through suicide. Fifth, I was physically weak and ill as a child, and have lived a little too long as it is. I have only one or two teeth left; I cannot see well; and my brain doesn't function well any more. I couldn't go on living like this. It's just about time I should die. Sixth, the accusation that I helped myself from the public funds has been disproved now and I can die in peace. Seventh, it is more fortunate to die in one instant than to suffer a lingering illness. If I had been given a life-sen-

tence, I should have been tormented with worldly passions and it would have been intolerable. The most important thing is that through faith I can die and go to the Paradise of Amida-Butsu. Yes, truly, I believe that this is the best time for me to die. Last night, when the announcement was delivered, I felt very cheery at heart. I felt I was about to attain the Inseparable Truth, as in the case of Hozo Bodhistava in the 'Sutra of the Great Infinite Life.' " [I felt that, like the Original Buddha, I had attained ineffable bliss.]

He asked about the gallows, and so I explained that he would die instantaneously because the spinal cord would be severed.

"I am very grateful that I can be reabsorbed into the soil of Japan," he said. And then, changing the subject, he went on: "Will you please, Doctor, explain to the authorities more in detail what I said last night about the pitiful condition of the families of the men confined here? I realize you are a busy man, but I believe temples like the Honganji could furnish assistants who could help you do something for the families of prisoners who die in straitened circumstances."

I told him that I had been thinking along those lines myself. And then: "I'm afraid our time is about up. I will visit you in your cells tonight from seven o'clock. Please take good care of yourself till then."

He bade me goodbye with great courtesy, and left.

Before going to the cells at seven o'clock, I transferred the statuette of Buddha that had been installed in one of the cells on the first floor of the women's compound until now, to one of the cells on the first floor of Cell Block No. 1, which was assigned for the spiritual use of the seven Class A men. I made ready the candlesticks, the incense burner,

the sacrificial tray, the wine, some chocolate and biscuits, cups and water. Then I cleaned and polished up everything in and around the altar. Then I went up to the third level, where I talked with each man. The procedure was this. An unoccupied cell was opened, blankets were piled up for a seat in the middle of its three-mat space, and the prisoners were brought in one by one. I had a chair right by that of the guard seated at the open entrance to the cell, and talked to each man from a two- or three-foot distance. There was no special order in which I saw the men. I had them called one by one from the cells in the rear. This was the first time they had appeared unhandcuffed.

An account of these last interviews follows:

*IWANE MATSUI. FROM 7:30 UNTIL 8 O'CLOCK*

He read me the contents of the letter he had with him, addressed to his wife:

"Last night on the 21st, announcement was made that under orders from General MacArthur, the execution by hanging would be carried out just after midnight, on the 23rd, within the compound of this prison. This being what I had expected, I did not show undue shock or surprise, but listened calmly. I come of a line of soldiers, and following my family profession became a private, advanced to the rank of General, and was awarded the third grade of the first Court rank. Later I was decorated with the first class, First Order of Merit, which was my greatest glory and for which I sincerely appreciate the infinite grace of the Throne. It happens that I have come to be sacrificed for the Nanking Incident, and for the responsibilities incurred in this connection I am to be executed by the Allied Powers. In view of the fact that earlier, in the battles around Shanghai and

Nanking, I lost so many subordinates, military and non-military, Japanese and Chinese, it is only proper that I follow these many dead myself.

"The Pacific War had nothing to do with me directly; yet, viewing it as an extension of the Sino-Japanese Incident, and taking into consideration my position and record, I do not feel absolved from responsibility. And now, amid the betrayal and disgrace of a defeated Japan, I fully realize my responsibility, and it is only natural that, with my own life, I should make full apology for everything. Looking back, I have no regrets as I meet my death, nor have I anything to feel ashamed of before all creation, or before the Gods and Buddha. My deepest regret is that I was unable to realize Sino-Japanese Cooperation and a new life for Asia, but on the contrary disturbed our nation to its ancient foundations. My spirit shall remain in the Koa-Kwannon in Izuyama for all time, to live on in the Sutra of Kwannon and protect and guard the great undertaking of Asiatic revival.

"My hopes are that Fumiko, Hisae, and those others who share my convictions will embody what I say and unite in a faith that is equal to all and afraid of nothing, and with true peace in their hearts, strive that these precepts be followed. Let my family live on after Fumiko and Hisae are gone. Therefore, as I have said, I have nothing to add about myself or my family. Everything about my funeral, the disposal of my effects, I leave to Fumiko's decision. With respect to the Matsui family tombs, do as I have told you before, and make some arrangement so that memorial services can be held for the graves in Nagoya forever. For the Koa-Kwannon\* in Izuyama, besides the society in existence now, it is my desire that a lecture association consisting of the interested

\* See Glossary.

parties in Japan and overseas be formed to carry out sacred rites there for all time. It is my wish that, if possible, the Kwannon be donated to the City of Atami and provision made for its safekeeping in the future. I hope the name of Koa-Kwannon [Revival of Asia Kwannon] will be retained, but if a change be unavoidable, let it be called Toa-Kwannon \* [East Asia Kwannon]. With regard to this matter of its disposal, ask the advice of Mutsuo Takagi, Hisashi Okada, and Rev. Mr. Shiio and Rev. Dr. Hanayama, and pray that the best ways and means be employed.

Against neither heaven nor man  
Does bitterness arise.  
For holding you in firm belief  
And fearing naught,  
I depart in peace of mind.

Although I begrudge  
Sacrificing my life,  
It is all that remains  
Of what I offered to this land of mine.

What word would I seek  
To leave behind for this world to heed?  
"For you, for him, for all to be  
Equally sincere in all you do."

Although multitudes  
Have forgotten how to live,  
Although the Three Faiths  
Have left this land of the Gods—

If only we fear not,  
The power of Kwannon  
Her light will spread  
O'er Asia and its lands.

"As personal effects I have five letters, my dentures, my glasses, my fingernail clippings, the trial records and a copy of General MacArthur's statement. I have no children and no property, and what else could I——"

Later I was able to receive everything with the exception of this letter quoted above, and handed the things over to Mrs. Matsui.

*KOKI HIROTA. FROM 8:00 UNTIL 8:25*

"It must be awfully hard on you to come so many times. And the work you must do after it is over!"

"I am happy to be allowed to do it."

Then I explained the order in which the execution was to be carried out.

"That means that I'll be——"

"There will be three of you together: Itagaki-san, Kimura-san, and yourself."

"Ah-h-h." He nodded his understanding.

"If it goes the way it did last night, it will be in alphabetical order. I don't know for sure, though; but I think it will be like last night when the announcement was made."

Then I asked him what he was leaving behind.

"My hair-clippings, a lower denture, and my glasses—I have handed these things over to the authorities. And some letters from my home and from other people."

"You have nothing of your own?"

"Yes, a few things. They are all in my bag. Please take good care of it. I have them listed."

"Did they give you some Japanese food today?"

"For supper we had rice, *miso* soup, broiled fish, meat, coffee, bread and jam."

"How about the newspapers?"

"We have seen them two or three times since the verdict."

"Which papers were they?"

"Let me see. Well, they were papers with articles about the trial, or about the Supreme Court and things like that."

"Then, you have put nothing in writing? Not even to your defense counsel?"

"No, I have not written anything. There doesn't seem to be anything to write about. Thank you very much."

*AKIRA MUTO. FROM 8:30 TO 9:30*

"A telegram came to my place a short while ago—I think from Bishop Walsh. This gentleman was trying to get America and Japan to sit down and thresh out their disagreements, when he was in Japan before the war. He is well known as an advocate of peace. He also sent some favorable testimonials in my behalf to the Court during the trial. I showed this telegram to Chaplain Walsh here, and he told me to have you translate it to me."

"The names are the same?"

"Yes, the names are the same, so I think the man here knows him well . . . Please tell Bishop Walsh that though our faiths may have been different I went to my death nobly and in peace of mind as a good Buddhist, and that I was deeply grateful for his many favors shown me during my lifetime."

(The Bishop later came to Tokyo and I gave him Muto-san's last message.)

[The names were not the same, if, as is probable, the bishop in question was the well-known Bishop Welch.]

"In this envelope I have put my will, the hair and fingernail clippings, some *tanka* and *haiku*, and a copy of the 'Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.' It is addressed to

you. You have been a great help to me indeed, Doctor. With your aid, a man of as little faith as I can now go to Paradise, and I am really indebted to you. And what a gracious Buddhist name you gave me!

Musically, I repeat  
The Buddhist name bestowed on me,  
And discover anew  
Fresh beauty there.

“I cannot tell you how blessed I feel to be able to glorify and sing praises to my own Buddhist name while I am still alive. I feel that the faith of my family is beginning to—what shall I say?—bud now, and I beg your guidance for them in this. I received a very sympathetic letter from Mr. Nakayama of the Honganji Temple in Akabane, a letter full of consolation. The *tanka*, *haiku*, and prose memoirs that I have scribbled down from time to time I have put together, and so, if the authorities will permit it, I ask your good offices in having them turned over to my family. My will forms part of my memoirs, so please take note of that fact. Looked at now, the ‘Goings and Comings at Sugamo Ferry’ that I mentioned the other day is a little out of date and represents my feelings at a time when I was unable to find myself in either the Shodo Sect or the Ekigyo Sect. But since I feel that the majority of my fellow-prisoners in Sugamo were in the same mood then, I will add this as another specimen of the things I have written:

#### GOINGS AND COMINGS AT SUGAMO FERRY

An urgent summons from the Palace in the West  
Is calling me;  
Yet the way is far and I a poor sailor.



But what care I? O Captain of my skiff,  
Though the darkness of night cover our sampan,  
To that far shore I bid thee now set sail.

The Lord of the West is a generous man;  
He will fill me with food, more than I need,  
And on my return alone, unguided and free,  
Will let me drink my fill—  
So to the sleep world I go.

To the Keeper of the Ships at Sugamo, Rev. Dr. Hanayama  
From layman Akira \*

"I composed this on the night of December 1st, and the next day inadvertently spoke of it to you. Now I feel that spiritually I have advanced beyond the stage depicted in it. Let me repeat my thanks to you for that. Through your help, I am able to make my journey in the beliefs of the Jodo-Shinshu Sect, which has been my family's denomination for generations. Yet in this day and age it seems as though most people not only have no inkling of the True Vow of Amida but are actually drifting farther and farther away from it. Doctor, I pray that you will take the best of care of yourself, and my wishes are that you will expend every effort in the spreading of the faith.

"Here are some more poems:

In memory of my childhood:

I can see my childhood self  
Adorning with flowers of the meadow  
The bowered shrine in that temple  
Nestling amid the foothills.

\* He feels he needs Hanayama's spiritual guidance to get to the other shore, but he will be able to come back to this world by himself as a Buddha.

## Viewing a winter sunset:

The majesty of the setting sun speaks  
Of the wickedness of conflict and hate,  
And naught is there I can do  
But bend my knees in prayer before it.

## The postponement of the execution:

Six days more of life, unexpectedly,  
I have for mine—  
How dear it is to me,  
How cherished it has come to be.

## Hearing a flute being played somewhere in another Block:

In lonely melody it echoes—  
A flute from behind prison bars—  
With the winter sunset, in its afterglow,  
Bathing the cells in its light.

## To my wife:

For wife and child though I yearn  
At times, this worldly self—  
Yet second to none, facing death,  
I am the warrior unafraid.

Amidst the weeds  
Though my body lie,  
The light from the Gods above  
Will brighten and shine over it.

“And then a couple of *haiku*, after reading ‘The Epistle of the Lament of the Unbeliever’:

The winter sun is beclouded,  
And in it I see  
My own soul.

The winter skies  
To me are deep  
In emptiness.

“My daughter came to see me dressed in Japanese clothes.  
They were her first, and she wanted to show them to me:

The desire wells up in me  
To buy for her a neckerchief.  
The cold is biting as o’er the screen  
I pass her only the clippings of my hair.

“And later:

How peaceful to stand  
Before the Altar  
Where gay chrysanthemums are offered.

“And once, when we were out exercising, I noticed Matsui-san walking facing the sun:

He gathers on his face,  
This man condemned to die,  
The rays of the winter sun.

How heavy they are, the iron cuffs,  
For the aged prisoner  
On this wintry day.

My fingers  
Get so numb  
From these iron cuffs.

Although on earth they storm,  
Those chilly winds,  
Yet are the Heavens serene and calm.

The slenderness of the bush-clover,  
As it bends  
Towards those chilling winds!

“This I wrote when it seemed likely that the execution  
would be carried out on December 8th:

Am I to depart  
Not to greet  
The dawning of the eighth of December?

Will it be that I am to set out  
With the stars of the eighth?

“On the 13th, a fly flew into my cell. Here is the series of  
*haiku* I wrote on that occasion:

In my cell, this winter day,  
Have I discovered  
A solitary fly.

Near and then afar,  
All around and about me  
Buzzes the winter fly.

I am not alone  
This winter day,  
For as company I have that fly.

How lonely it is  
To find it gone—  
The fly of winter!

“A few more:

Leaves painted yellow one and two,  
They glitter and they sparkle  
There in the winter sun.

On me it brightens,  
The winter sun,  
For I have left the world behind.

"After being called out suddenly to receive the announcement last night, here is what I wrote:

Although 'tis frosty tonight,  
I am resigned  
To my departing.

"This afternoon after I left you, I was listening to the clatter of Matsui-san's clogs"—the clatter of Matsui-san's clogs was always loud:

The clatter of the *geta*  
Climbing the Gallows  
Through the frosty night.

"I have written twenty pages to my wife and daughter, calling them my memoirs. They are poor enough:

"I am fully resolved. Outside of a slight sore throat, I am in perfect health. I spend my time playing cards and reading. My death has been definitely decided on. I do have surges of fear of death, and it seems that the others have them too. Yoshida Shoin, in the purge of Ansei, must have had them too. It is the will to live showing; reasoning can do nothing about it. I have come so far without feeling conscious of religion.

"I am convinced that Japan can rebuild, even though everything has been burnt in the war. You must find your satisfactions in your present simple way of life, and restrain your material desires. It is not good to dream of the materialistic

life that belongs to the past. Rather than a material life, seek for a spiritual life on a higher plane. I am not dictating your religion for you, but I can at least now affirm the absolute need for religion in man. I myself have found peace in the teachings of the Jodo Shinshu sect."

Then he read me a letter to his family emphasizing the necessity for leading a religious life. One of the passages was the following:

"I have received Ko-Muryo-Ju as my Buddhist name. So if you should wish to see me, chant the Namu-Amida-Butsu and we will be sure to meet. Be sure to come to me after many years. But don't ever come before that time. Buddha is the light. I am telling you this now because previously I wrote that while reconciled to death I sometimes have spasms of fear and you may worry about that. But as a soldier in war I have always been prepared; my heart is always ready and set. I was not speaking about that. I meant the attachment for life that a man has even when he is calmly resolved, ready and waiting for death to come. I will be second to none in courage when I go to execution. When we were summoned at nine o'clock tonight, after being told that it was Hanayamasan who wanted to see us, I felt certain it was the execution. The announcement was read to us, but I was calm and collected. They weighed us, after which I returned to my cell, smoked, and slept well.

"On the twenty-second I read the Holy Scriptures, smoked, and began feeling amused at the thought that this was the last day of my life, since sentence will be carried out at midnight tonight. I only feel it impersonally. It is really

amazing. As in the case described in Chapter Nine of 'The Epistle of the Lament of the Unbeliever,' so it is with myself: I cannot be happy over my death, yet neither do I feel uneasy. After I join the Buddhas, we will not be kept apart as we are now. I am sure I can make you all fortunate. Life has its bright sunny days, and then there are the gloomy, cloudswept days.

"It is now ten in the morning. I will leave off writing these memoirs, and spend what time is left until twelve midnight, quietly."

*HIDEKI TOJO. FROM 9:30 UNTIL 10:30*

I told him the order, or procedure, which would be followed at the execution, and he told me the following, which is a miscellany of remarks and messages he wanted transmitted.

"Hanayama-san has read to me two letters from Katsuko, and all the letters from Makie, Yukie, and Kimie. I want to thank you all for this. Also tell Makie, that her description of Kunimasa's feelings towards his father and grandfather was really quite touching. He shows the beginnings of a Buddha in him, and please have it understood that it is my desire that this matter of religious training should be taken up and developed while he is a child.

"To Katsuko my death may come as a great shock spiritually. But I want her under the Grace of Buddha to fulfill her natural life. Chapter One of 'The Epistle of the Lament of the Unbeliever' strikes a responsive chord in one's heart: when it comes to the final reckoning, the chanting of the Sacred Name and this alone is sufficient.

“And for you, Doctor, I have written a few poems:

The fruit and the blossom, when they fall  
They see not, neither do they feel;  
’Tis but the winds  
That call them over.

“I used the words ‘but. the winds’ in this, because I felt that I wanted to express the great might of Nature herself.

And now, as in the fullness of my heart  
I hurry West,  
Not a cloud besmirches  
Or shadows my soul.

Before the Glory of Buddha  
That lights and brightens the way,  
Even as the light of fireflies are they—  
The Sun and also the Moon.”

He also read some lengthy letters addressed to Mr. Kiyose, Mr. Blewett, and myself.

*ITAGAKI, SEISHIRO. FROM 10:30 UNTIL 10:50*

I explained to him the order of things tonight, and he notified me that his first communication to me consisted of three sheets and the second of five sheets, and that to his family he had addressed a letter covering three sheets of heavy writing paper, and that he was leaving them his copy of the “Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures” and his glasses. He said he had sent out his sixth letter. And then for his last words he gave me the following, prefacing them with the statement, “I will have to swallow my pride in showing them to you.”



And now, I have but to fly  
To the "Eagle's Mount,"  
Chanting from my heart  
The Myo-Ho-Renge-Kyo.\*

Although the spring  
Is not for me to greet,  
Yet I begrudge  
The close of the year.

He had other poems besides this, and he remarked, "I have written to my wife telling her of my religious experiences."

HEITARO KIMURA. FROM 11:00 UNTIL 11:30

I told him also about the plans for tonight. He said he was leaving his will written on seven sheets of paper, his copy of "Essays on the Enjoyment of the Way," a letter to Tadakatsu Tanaka (containing a special letter of thanks to Arisue and Suga), four pictures for Tanaka, his trial records with his marginal comments, two pairs of glasses, a denture for his entire lower jaw, and his finger-nail clippings. They were all in a bag. He also said he wanted to go to his death wearing his beads.

He said, "I have written another *tanka* this very evening at about six o'clock, and put it at the end of my will:

Although I have but a few short hours  
In this world to spend,  
High above, o'er life and death,  
Beams the glory of the light of Buddha."

And then he added, "I am exceedingly healthy to the very end. I feel quite cheerful and am happy. I was playing

\* See Glossary.

cards with Muto until only a short while ago. Please tell them I met my death calmly and composedly, and that I died nobly."

*KENJI DOIHARA. FROM 11:14 UNTIL 11:30*

As in the former cases, I explained the order in which the execution would be carried out tonight. I found that in the bag he had placed three letters addressed to me (the first consisted of four papers ten, ten, two, and two sheets long respectively, totalling twenty-four sheets in all. The second was thirteen sheets, and the third was nine sheets long), his copy of the "Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures," his glasses, three gold crowns that had fallen off his teeth, and a six-paged letter which he had received from his wife and children.

He said, "Disgraceful though it may be to be branded a War Criminal, I am grateful that in any case my death is proving helpful. Please tell them that. Please accept the letters I have addressed to you. Things in China have failed, but if through my death they can be bettered, I believe I am satisfied."

3.

*Through the Portals of This Life into the Eternal*

It was already 11:30, so I hurried down to the first floor, made certain that the Buddhist Chapel was in perfect order, poured the wine into the cups, got the water ready, and awaited the coming of the seven condemned men.

Within a few minutes, the first group to be executed—

Doihara, Matsui, Tojo, and Muto—came filing down in that order. To each man there were two guards. Both hands were handcuffed, and the cuffs were thrust through a band, fastened in loincloth style. It was terribly uncomfortable and inconvenient. Their clothes were the usual American Army work clothes, but their shirts stuck out of their trousers here and there. They wore Japanese laced shoes on their feet.

Being informed by the officer in charge that I had only seven minutes, I lit the incense and the candles in front of the altar, handed each man a stick of incense and had them place it in the incense-burner, which I lowered and brought up close to them, and then asked them to sign their names on the heavy Japanese paper I had set up folded by the altar. Lifting with difficulty their encumbered hands, they took the inked brush and wrote their names, beginning with Doihara and followed in order. Then I placed the cups full of wine at their lips and had them drink it. Tojo-san's desire for "at least one drink" was thus fulfilled somehow or other and he was quite happy.

At this point I was told I had two more minutes, so I read for them the first three and the last eulogies of the "Sutra of the Three Promises." The four men bowed their heads, listening in silence with their eyes closed, and as I ended they expressed their gratitude, saying "Thank you very much." And then, who spoke I do not know, someone uttered the word "banzai," and I think it was Tojo-san that said "Matsui-san, if you please." And so with Matsui-san taking the lead, three "Long Live the Emperor's" and three "Long Live the Empire of Japan's" were shouted.

After the wine I asked them, "How about some cookies?", but they had all taken out their dentures and they refrained,

saying they were without teeth. Yet when I placed a soft biscuit in Matsui-san's mouth he munched it.

Because the Buddhist Chapel was so small and cramped, the foregoing all took place standing in the hall.

At this moment, Tojo handed me his beads as he had promised. And seeing that Matsui-san also had his with him, I suggested that he give them to me to deliver to his wife.

"If you please," he said, and gave them to me.

The other two told me that they had left theirs in the bags in their cells.

Then they exchanged their goodbyes and shook hands with Chaplain Walsh and two or three of the officers. I also shook hands with each man and exchanged goodbyes.

All of them were happy, and expressed their gratitude for my labors for them. They asked me to "take care of our families left behind."

The time was at hand.

The steel door at the entrance opened. With the officer on duty in the lead, the chaplain and me following, and then Doihara, Matsui, Tojo, and Muto in that order, we crossed the courtyard. Each man had guards on both sides of him, and two or three officers brought up the rear. It took only about two minutes, but the voices of the men, especially Tojo's, chanting the "Namu-Amida-Butsu," could be heard throughout.

At the door of the gallows (which were walled in with concrete), I left the group and, shaking hands with each of the four again, gave them my priestly blessing.

With a "Thank you so much for all you have done for us. Please take care of our families for us," they turned away smiling and disappeared into the gallows. From what I heard

later, all four of them were chanting the "Namu-Amida-Butsu" on the gallows to the very end.

As I was hurrying back to the Chapel, I heard a loud crash and turned instinctively for a last look behind me. It was one minute after midnight.

After returning to the Chapel, I had just finished my preparations again, when the second group consisting of Itagaki, Hirota, and Kimura came down.

As they paused at the door of the Chapel, Hirota-san edged over to me and said very earnestly, "You just had a *manzai*, didn't you?"

"*Manzai*?" I answered stupidly. "No, nothing of the kind. No, nothing of the kind. You must have heard it coming from another Block."

I had the three men enter the Chapel, gave them each a stick of incense to put in the incense-burner, and had them sign their names, as I had done before. We had a little more time on this occasion, so I read them the entire text of the "Sutra of the Three Promises." Kimura-san alone had come down wearing his glasses. He also had his "Interpretations of the Holy Scriptures" with him, and during my reading of the Sutra, he opened his book and joined me in the reading.

After the reading was over, Hirota-san turned to me and said, "Didn't you have a *manzai* after this Sutra?"

It finally dawned on me what he meant and I replied, "Do you mean *banzai*? Yes, we did." I had just discovered that his *manzai* was *banzai*.\*

\* *Manzai*, in Hanayama's dialect, meant "a gossip social gathering"; in Fukuoka, where Hirota came from, it means *banzai*. Hence the confusion.

I said, "Will you do it now, if you please?"

Hirota-san turned to Itagaki-san and said, "You'd better lead us."

And taking Itagaki-san's lead they gave out three thunderous "Long Live the Emperor's." Naturally they were unable to follow the usual custom of raising the hands.

Then I had them drink the wine while lined up in the Chapel. I took the cups myself and, without any help from the American soldiers there, put the wine to their lips. Even Hirota-san drank to the last drop in evident enjoyment, while Itagaki-san took his in one big gulp. He acted like a man who enjoys drinking. Kimura-san alone left more than half of his wine in the cup. I took it that he wasn't fond of drinking. Next, we drank the water and shook hands, firmly. They smiled their thanks. "We certainly have put you to a lot of trouble. Please take the best of care of yourself and look out for our families."

We moved toward the gallows, forming a group identical with the previous one. And at the door to the gallows I took leave of them, as before. At the end, Kimura-san bowed his head several times, smiled and, saying, "Please take care of my wife and the others for me. And thank you so much for everything," went into the gallows.

The gallows inside were lit up brightly with lights, although the courtyard was dark.

Just about half way back, this time too I heard a loud crash.

It was 00:20 o'clock.

I put things in order again in the Chapel and then returned to the gallows. I was given a sign and told I could go

in. And there I found it not so light as I had thought. The seven caskets were brought in. In front of the caskets, I chanted the "Sutra of the True Faith," adding the Mass of "Namu-Amida-Butsu." It was my habit to read the "Sutra of Amida" on occasions like this, but that sutra was not included in the "Interpretations of the Holy Scriptures" I had. All the while I was chanting the Sutra, Chaplain Walsh stood by me with his flashlight lighting up the pages of my Scripture Book for me.

All was confusion in the gallows with the cleaning up, and men were running here and there, but I wish to say that not a single man passed between, or attempted to cross the space between, me and the caskets.

Everything ended with this. The seven men with whom I had spoken and laughed such a short while ago now lay there in quiet, without a quiver. I doubt if there are many cases where the dividing line between life and death is so thin as this.

The signatures they had written just before their deaths were, in this sense, an incomparable record of the men.\* I felt that the deaths of the seven men, who had died with not a sign of grief or agitation, but in their customary composure and calm with Namu-Amida-Butsu on their lips, had engraved an impression upon me that I could never forget.

I returned to the Chaplains' Office with Lieutenant Walsh and then was taken to the officers' club. The Colonel and many

\* See frontispiece. Note the strength of the strokes, brushed by men who were manacled at the time, and within five minutes of their death.

of the other officers came up to me and shook hands and said, "Everything went off splendidly, and we all feel that it was largely your work that made it possible. We wish to thank you. Everyone here greatly appreciates all you have been doing."

I spent about an hour and a half chatting with the officers on this and that, but I was terribly tired and I still had some matters that needed attention; so I said my goodbyes and returned to my room, immediately putting the dates to the Buddhist names of the six men, and then running my eye through the various notes I had taken during the day.

I woke up to discover that it was already seven o'clock. I switched the radio on to hear the announcement made by the Liaison Bureau. The executions were at 00:01 and 00:20, just as my watch had indicated.

About noon, the chaplain came and said, "There are quite a few newspapermen waiting for you outside." So, after receiving the last effects of the men, and listening to the three-o'clock news report over the radio, I took my way by jeep to the Research Institute of Indian Philosophy at Tokyo University, where by previous arrangement I was to hold a group meeting with the Japanese and Foreign Press.

At this meeting one of the reporters of a foreign news agency persisted in pestering me with questions about the faces of the dead as they lay in their caskets. In spite of myself I reprimanded him sharply. On that occasion, it was unbearable for me to be pressed so far. After all, I was terribly tired.



## CHAPTER VIII

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### THE DISCOVERY OF PEACE

**MAN'S** life is full of faults. Not realizing this fact himself, he often troubles others by repeating his sins.

In a perpetual wrangle with his ego and personality, man struggles along his lifepath. This is a karma, or law of fate, controlling all men, whether privates or generals, Orientals or Westerners.

This is true not only of the life of the individual but also of that of a "race" or a state. The fact that most wars, conflicts, and strife in the past have originated in such thrusts and collisions of the naked egos has been made clear by history itself.

History is nothing but a kaleidoscope showing the agonies of mankind and its struggle for deliverance from them.

Though eternal and invariable justice has been the goal of mankind from ancient times, such justice is not likely to be easily realized on this earth as yet. The mistaken idea that justice is not the source of power but that power itself is justice seems to be still ruling this earth. Despite our longing for eternal peace we cannot attain it yet in reality. The Versailles system restored peace in Europe—but only for twenty years, and it ended in being utilized by the Nazis as a slogan for their revenge in World War II. The so-called Washington sys-

tem of naval treaties seemed to settle the balance of power in Asia permanently, but it roused Japan to take recourse to arms and so did not succeed in the establishment of eternal peace in Asia after all.

And now, though the organization of the United Nations was established with the end of World War II and seemed likely to be able really to secure peace this time, already the world has fallen into two violently opposed camps just when the new mechanism is starting to work.

And so, despite its ardent hope for the establishment of justice and eternal peace in the past and present, mankind has not yet succeeded in building them up on this earth. Such is the real state of affairs.

Our Emperor in his surrender message said, "Enduring what cannot easily be endured, I am determined to open the way to everlasting peace." We who listened to those words, knowing how difficult such an accomplishment would be in the present world, made up our minds to devote ourselves to this high cause.

General MacArthur also, in his message declaring his approval of the judgment of the Tribunal, frankly acknowledged human limitations by asking Divine guidance so that mankind could renounce war.

Both the ideal and the agony of reality expressed in the General's message are well understood by us. In them lie both the human sorrow which flows through our hearts, and our reliance upon the Absolute, which cannot be wooed by law or by power.

The fact is, the world is still in a critical condition and needs Divine protection.

But, as I have said in previous chapters of this book, I have seen with my own eyes the figures of many noble men

who, having passed through the agony of the present world, finally entered upon the path of perfect truth. Is this not a living lesson and guarantee for the future of mankind and us Japanese? It is true that some of these men—a very few—could not enter the true religious life and left behind them such threats as, "From now the war begins." But I know that most of them, looking up at the higher truth which transcends defeat or rancor in war, left this life very calmly, having discovered the spiritual riches which the world needs and has never found.

The war criminals have been aptly called the very incarnation of Japanese nationalism. So it is natural to suppose that they would die in the spirit of the oft-cited ancient words: "I will be reincarnated seven times and give all seven lives to my country." But, in reality, these men left the world not as approvers but as the harshest denouncers of Japanese militarism. Such was not mere personal repentance. Passing far beyond such a state, they discovered the real, eternal peace which is beyond any victory or defeat, and mastery or servitude, and any personalities, and ended their lives here on earth in extreme richness of soul. And such a spiritual state, which these executed men attained, has stirred their families as a wordless guide and led them to live a life of gratitude and peace such as they had never experienced. Is this not a wonderful thing?

These men left this world in the ardent belief that absolute peace could be realized here too. They entrusted their own lives to the gallows, confident of the existence of a world of limitless light and life lying beyond the abyss of the conflicts and antipathies of this world. This is the discovery of the truth that there is in reality but one world, and that it is impossible that there can be two worlds.

It is a proof of the pitiable state of our present society that peace cannot be maintained except through power. But through the sacrifice of their own lives the men in Sugamo asserted and realized the opposite theory. If they had wanted to struggle, they could have resisted. But such a thought never entered their minds. Or if it did in some cases at first, they soon abandoned it. As for me, during the time I knew them, such an apprehension was utterly nonsensical.

What was the reason? In my opinion, it was because these men had discovered an existence wider than this circumscribed one. The ordinary life is limited. But if one looks around more carefully, one discovers a limitless world. Fated to stand in such critical circumstances, these men were made aware of the limits of human ability, and so discovered the higher world of harmony that lies beyond it. Some people might attribute their so-called "conversion" to the current trend of the times. Others might say that after a fruitless struggle all men arrive at a state of resignation. But the state these men were in was not a passive one. I must emphasize with all the force I have at my command that it was a stronger and more active state of mind.

Peace not based upon force cannot be secured in this actual world unless mankind strives for it with a strong will. And the maintenance of such a peace needs an active will much stronger than mere armaments.

I recognized in these men, as manifested by the manner of their deaths, the ardent will to attain this peace—a will strong enough to fill mankind's eternal want. They showed the strength of this peace and a sublimity of religious faith which never can be overwhelmed by any violence of material power.

I do not believe that there is anything stronger than the

firm will of men. I cannot help believing that only such a will can make a lasting peace possible.

Compared with eternity, twenty or thirty years are only a brief moment. Viewed from such a standpoint, love or hatred between individual human beings and wars between nations are merely the caricatures of a brief moment.

To those who have discovered the firm and eternal way, such things seem pitifully small.

I cannot help praying, in the above sense, that each little step taken by these men will be developed into mighty strides by us whom they have left behind, leading to the realization of true harmony and justice in the world.



## APPENDIX I

### RECORDS OF TWENTY-SEVEN CONDEMNED PRISONERS

- No. 1. Kei Yuri (27 yrs.) Ex-1st Lt. Former Commandant of Omuta P.O.W. Camp  
Executed at 05:15 April 26,  
Native place: Dazaifu-machi, Tsukushi-gun, Fukuoka-ken  
Bereaved family: Mother, Tsuru (66 yrs.)
- No. 2. Katsunori Tamura (18 yrs.)  
Executed at 04:19 May 17,  
Native place: Umi-machi, Kasuya-gun, Fukuoka-ken  
Bereaved family: Both parents survived, six brothers and sister
- No. 3. Isao Fukuhara (30 yrs. Ex-Capt. Former Commandant of Omuta P.O.W. Camp  
Executed by hanging at 05:02 August 9,  
Native place: Masuda-machi, Mino-gun, Shimane-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Michiko (26 yrs.) with two children
- No. 4. Kaichi Hirate (29 yrs.) Ex-Capt. Former Commandant of Muroran P.O.W. Camp  
Executed by hanging at 05:00 August 23,  
Native place: Higashi 3-chome, Sanjo, Kitami-city, Hokkaido  
Bereaved family: Father. Masayuki (56 yrs.)
- No. 5. Masaki Mabuchi (33 yrs.) Ex-Capt.  
Executed at 05:00 September 6,  
Native place: Nanao-machi, Ishikawa-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Setsuko (27 yrs.) and a child
- No. 6. Uichi Ikegami (27 yrs.) Ex-1st Lt. Former Commandant  
Executed at 05:02 February 14,  
Native place: Choanji-machi, Kumamoto-city  
Bereaved family: Wife, Setsuko (27 yrs.) and a child

- No. 7. Hajime Honda (32 yrs.) Former civilian attached Fukuoka P.O.W. Camp  
Executed at 01:30 July 3,  
Native place: Hiroyasu-mura, Kamimashiki-gun, Kumamoto-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Tane (31 yrs.)
- No. 8. Sadamu Motokawa (42 yrs.) Ex-1st M.P. Attached to Tokyo Military Police Unit  
Executed at 01:30 July 3,  
Native place: Tama-mura, Fuwagun, Gifu-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Shimae (31 yrs.), a son and two daughters
- No. 9. Matsukichi Muda (41 yrs.) Former civilian attached to Omuta P.O.W. Camp  
Executed by hanging at 01:30 July 3,  
Native place: Maisaka-mura, Mitsui-gun, Fukuoka-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Sugi (42 yrs.), a son and a daughter
- No. 10. Sadashi Takeda (34 yrs.) Former civilian attached to Omuta P.O.W. Camp  
Executed by hanging at 02:00 July 3,  
Native place: 18 Nakajima-cho, Omuta-city  
Bereaved family: Father-in-law, Shunzo (58 yrs.)
- No. 11. Yoshiichi Takagi (35 yrs.) Former civilian attached to a branch camp of Osaka Area P.O.W. Camp  
Executed at 02:00 July 3,  
Native place: Kodaira-mura, Rumoe-gun, Hokkaido  
Bereaved family: Taiko (wife), 29 yrs., and two sons
- No. 12. Isu Sugazawa (57 yrs.) Ex-Col. Former Commandant of Fukuoka-Area P.O.W. Camp  
Executed at 02:00 July 3,  
Native place: Chiba-ken  
Bereaved family: The eldest son, Tatsuo (14 yrs.)



- No. 13. Ikkan Suematsu (47 yrs.) Ex-Capt. Former Commandant of Orio P.O.W. Camp, Fukuoka Area  
Executed at 02:30 July 3,  
Native place: Fukuyoshi-mura, Itoshima-gun, Fukuoka-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Tae (38 yrs.), and four children
- No. 14. Asami Hozumi (31 yrs.) Ex-Sgt. Attached to Orio Camp. Fukuoka Area  
Executed by hanging at 02:30 July 3,  
Native place: Kurokami-machi, Kumamoto-city  
Bereaved family: Wife, Sumiko (24 yrs.), a daughter and mother, Hajime (57 yrs.)
- No. 15. Kosei Igawa (38 yrs.) Former civilian attached to Sasebo Naval Garrison  
Executed by hanging at 00:30 August 21,  
Native place: Nagasaki-city  
Bereaved family: None (all his family was killed by the atomic bomb)
- No. 16. Junzaburo Toshino (45 yrs.) Ex-Capt. Former Commanding Officer of Army Transport S.S. Oryoko-maru  
Executed by hanging at 00:30 August 21,  
Bereaved family: Wife, Masako (42 yrs.), and two daughters
- No. 17. Kazutane Aihara (37 yrs.) Ex-Cpl. attached to Cabanatuan P.O.W. Camp P.I.  
Executed by hanging at 00:30 August 21,  
Native place: Minami-yoshii-mura, Onsen-gun, Ehime-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Masako (31 yrs.), no child
- No. 18. Sukeo Nakajima (46 yrs.) Ex-Capt. Former Commandant of Hiraoka P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 00:30 August 21,  
Bereaved family: Wife, Fuku (42 yrs.), a son and two daughters

- No. 19. Sadaji Hiramatsu (33 yrs.) Former civilian attached to  
Hiraoka P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 00:30 August 21,  
Native place: Kamihara, Shimoina-gun, Nagano-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Hisae (34 yrs.), two sons and a  
daughter
- No. 20. Harumi Kawate (33 yrs.) Former civilian attached to  
Hiraoka P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 01:00 August 21,  
Native place: Chiyo-mira, Ina-gun, Nagano-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Miyoshi (30 yrs.) and Father  
(61 yrs.)
- No. 21. Tamotsu Kimura (40 yrs.) Former civilian attached to  
Hiraoka P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 01:00 August 21,  
Native place: Ichida-mura, Shimoina-gun, Nagano-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Toshiko (37 yrs.), two sons, two  
daughters and mother (70 yrs.)
- No. 22. Kunio Yoshizawa (30 yrs.) Former civilian attached to  
Mitsushima P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 01:00 August 21,  
Native place: Tokyo-city  
Bereaved family: Wife, Midori (27 yrs.), and one daughter
- No. 23. Masanori Michishita (32 yrs.) Ex-Master Sgt. attached to  
Mitsushima P.O.W. Camp, Nagano-ken  
Executed by hanging at 01:00 August 21,  
Native place: Kiro-mura, Tamasugu, Ishikawa-ken  
Bereaved family: Parents, dead; no wife and child
- No. 24. Takupi Murayami (49 yrs.) Ex-Capt. Former Com-  
mandant of Niihama P.O.W. Camp  
Executed by hanging at 01:00 August 21,  
Native place: Taguma-mura, Mitsugi-gun, Hiroshima-ken  
Bereaved family: Wife, Hifumi (39 yrs.), and four children



## APPENDIX II

By Kaichi Hirate (Page 5)

In agony:

We men are miserable creatures,  
For we know how to think at least.  
Though I have made up my mind to devote myself to the service  
of Buddha,  
Why doesn't my heart become calm?  
Though in ordinary years I am not so moved by the soft  
rains of May,  
Now I feel very sad as my heart is depressed.

Feeling a little relieved:

How stupid it is to strive to seek after the eternal truth  
That cannot be attained forever,  
And at the same time to bemoan the shortness of one's  
remaining life!  
Please listen to me, O Limitless Great Mercy and Great Sorrow—  
Buddha, I will confess to you the true picture of myself.

Why do you worry? Why do you moan?  
This life is only a dew-drop on the morning-glory.

Thinking of his sweetheart:

Though I thought I'd never look at this picture again,  
I now gaze at it as my mind is already determined.

With strong faith:

Only when we go beyond earthly passion  
Can we find the true path.  
I wish to see others smiling.

The more I reflect the more it becomes clear  
How deep my ignorance is.  
How I have changed!  
For now I have, at any rate, some doubt about such secular  
morality as is expressed by the words "humanity" and  
"integrity."

By Kunio Yoshizawa (See Page 91)

O Red Camellia! I am not such a great and extravagant poet as to  
associate your figure with "Camille"!

Also, I seek no affection or love to trouble you.

I don't know at all whether flowers have a language,  
But if you have, won't you whisper to me?  
I am not a sentimental fellow,  
But even such a man knows what he likes,

And I am fond of you.  
Do you know the reason?  
You always bloom later than other camellias  
—Don't you?

You show your beauty when other camellias have already fallen  
—Don't you?

You show your beauty when other camellias have already fallen  
—Don't you?  
And then you array yourself for me as beautifully as you can.  
Array yourself so gorgeously that I fear your little body must be  
quite exhausted.

There's one more reason—the most important one—  
It is that you have a warm heart.  
But you do not bloom for me any more.  
I have been cool to you,  
But I am confident that I know you better than any other poets,  
For, if I close my eyes, you always blossom  
Fragrantly inside my eyelids.

For the boat departing for the other world  
 Prayers to Buddha are the greatest need!  
 Now I am on the way to the other world.  
 But I see already a hope of the dawn when I shall come here again.  
 I am very happy,  
 For I've been able to keep my body till today.

I am going to see my beloved parents in my native country.  
 I am lucky as I shall be able to be beatified soon by the help of  
 merciful Buddha.

Those who know that everything is His mercy are called wise men.  
 To change death into love!  
 Oh, how merciful Amida Buddha is!

6:30 P.M., August 20,

### APPENDIX III

*Lecture on Kannonkyo*, to Mr. Matsui.

*Living Along the Sacred Road* by Hanayama, to Mr. Tojo and Mr. Araki.

*The Essence of Buddhism*, to both Mr. Umezu and Mr. Doihara.

*Lecture on Tannsho* by Umehara, to Mr. Teiichi Suzuki.

*True Salvation* by Tohei Fuji, to Mr. Shimada.

*Praise of and Thanks to the Shoshinge* by Bin Akegarasu, to both Mr. Sato and Mr. Hirota.

*Lecture on the Shoshinge* by Seijitsu Ohara, to Mr. Koiso.

*On Religious Faith* by Katsuichiro Kamei, to Mr. Kido.

*Religion as the Keynote of Life* by Fuji, to Mr. Hiranuma.

*My Humble Impression as It Is* by Fujii, to Mr. Minami.

*Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul*, to Mr. Hata.

*Salvation by Faith* by Kozui Otani, to Mr. Shigemitsu.

*Looking for Faith* by Fuji, to Mr. Itagaki.

*Having Conquered Afflictions* by Fuji, to Mr. Kaya.

*Talks on the Buddhist Sutras* by Shugaku Yamanobe.

*The History of Jodo-Kyo* and *By Help of Buddha* both by Taiei Kaneko.

*Night Talks on Zen* by Reirin Yamada.

*A Lecture on Shoshinge* by Seijitsu Ohara.

*A Lecture on the Hannyashin Sutra* by Tamaoki.

*A New Interpretation of the Konjaku-monogatari* (Tales New and Old), *A New Interpretation of Eigenki, Character of the True Followers of Buddha*, all three by Umehara.

*The Path Japan Should Follow*, by Jusho Kiyama.

*Seeking After Faith, Overcoming Agony of Spirit* both by Fuji.

*Those Who Succeed in Knowing the Truth* by Nakano.

*The Way Buddhism Should Take* and *The Advice of an Englishman* by Major Brinkley.

*Daihorin* (The Great Mercy of Buddha), July and August numbers.

*World Buddhism*, June and July numbers.

*Faith*, September number.

*Juppo* (The Universe), August number.

*Daihorin*, September number.

*Buddhist Culture*, July, August, September, and October numbers.

*A Guide to Seekers After Truth and Man*, by Kenryo Inaba.

*The Story of Josei Bosatsu* by Iwami.

*Bunka Shimpo* (The Cultural Gazette) and *Twelve Principles of Buddhism* by Humphries, president of the Buddhist Association of Great Britain.

*Doki* (The Same Belief) by Bin Akegarasu.

*The Sutra of Hannyashin* translated from the Chinese and the Sanskrit.





## *Glossary of Buddhist and Other Terms Used In This Book*

*Amida*—See *Buddha*.

*Bodhisattva*—A potential Buddha. Applied to a living believer, in contrast to *Jo-Butsu*, a deceased believer who is now a Buddha.

*Buddha* (circa 563-483 B.C.)—Indian philosopher and founder of Buddhism. This great teacher has many names, depending on the aspect of him which is viewed. A few of these are *Gautama*, *Sakya-Muni* (Sakya being the name of his tribe or clan, and Muni his personal name), *Hotoke-sama*, *Amida-Butsu* (Buddha of Unlimited Light), the Ho (i.e., Original) Bodhisattva, etc.

*Buddhism*—The complex of religions founded by Gautama Buddha. Japanese Buddhism is blessed with almost as many sects and denominations as is Christianity, but the three most frequently mentioned in this book are *Jodo-shu* (Dr. Hanayama's sect), *Shinshu*, and *Zen-shu*. They may be said (much too simply) to represent, respectively: Faith-and-Works, Faith, and Meditation. The second<sup>1</sup> is an offshoot of the first; the third represents a severe mental discipline, in which the believer (we quote from Reischauer \*) "seeks thus to penetrate into the inner recesses of reality, into what might be called 'the white silence of Truth'." Dr. Hanayama has stated to the present writers, since the publication of his book, that his poor success in reaching the heart of Koki Hirota was perhaps owing to the fact that the latter was not, as Hanayama supposed, a Zen believer or indeed a Buddhist at all, but a follower of Confucianism, which is not a religion but a system of ethics. He found this out too late, he says, after the execution.

\* *Studies in Japanese Buddhism*, by August Karl Reischauer, N. Y., Macmillan, 1917.

*"Diadem of the Lady."* The allusion is obscure, but is probably to the Queen of Bimbisara to whom Buddha appeared in all his glory when she was imprisoned by her unfilial son.

*Furuna*—One of Buddha's famous disciples.

*Haiku*—Seventeen-syllable Japanese poem. See *Tanka*.

*Jodo-shu*—See *Buddhism*.

*Kimigayo*—The Japanese National Anthem. Addressed to the Emperor, it runs:

May our Lord's Reign  
Last a thousand ages,  
Till the tiny pebble  
Grows into a giant boulder  
Covered with green moss!

It has but the one stanza, which is sung twice.

*Koa Kai*—Society for the Reconstruction of Asia (under Japanese auspices). General Matsui, in thinking of the future of his statue of Kwannon, realizes that the victorious Allies may have some natural objections to the retention of the name Koa Kwannon, and so suggests that it be renamed Toa (i.e., East Asia) Kwannon.

*Kwannon*, or *Kwanyin*—Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. One of the most beautiful and charming deities of the Buddhist pantheon. Originally conceived of as male, Kwannon has become female probably because of her gentle qualities.

*Namu-Myo-Ho-Renge-Kyo*—"Revere the Law of the 'Lotus Sutra'." The cry or invocation of the believers of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism, who think that repeating this sentence over and over is the quintessence of worship. The Nichiren people—at least viewed unsympathetically from the outside—are rather long on noise.

*Nisei*—Literally "second generation." Americans of Japanese ancestry, who gave a splendid account of themselves in World War II as fighters in Europe and as interpreters in the Pacific area. They are among the best of our citizens.

*Ojoyoshu*—One of the Buddhist gospels.

*San* or *Sama*—A Japanese honorific placed after a proper name, similar to our Mister, Miss, or Mrs.

*Sanshoge*—One of the Buddhist gospels.

*Sensei*—Literally "born before." A respectful term for "teacher."

*Shaku*—A prefix to the name of a believer in Buddha. E.g., Shaku-Hideki means Believer-in-Buddha Hideki. Used in posthumous names.

*Shin-shu*—See *Buddhism*.

*Shinto*—"The Way of the Gods." Ancestor-worship. State Shinto, which was one cause of Japanese megalomania and aggression, deified the Emperor as the head of the national family, and deified Japan as the Land of the Gods and hence the legitimate lord of nations. It has been abolished, one hopes permanently, by order of General MacArthur and by the Emperor's own statement that he does not pretend to be divine. As a religion and a philosophy, it is a crude an-nistic affair and not to be compared with Buddhism.

*Sutra*—The narrative parts of the Buddhist scriptures. The term also applies to reported dialogues between Buddha and his disciples.

*Syaka-Muni* or *Shaka*—See *Buddha*.

*Tanka*—A thirty-one syllable Japanese poem. The *tanka* and the *haiku* (seventeen syllables) are the most famous and most popular forms of Japanese poetry, and as can be seen from

the results in this book are not easily translatable. The difficulty is two-fold: each brief poem contains a key-word which has two or more meanings, and the vocabulary used, while richly allusive to a Japanese, is often commonplace, inane, or even worse to a foreigner. When, in the last century, Meiji Tenno's empress, seeking to show her affection for the retiring American Minister's wife, wrote in honor of the latter's departure:

"Homeward the old goose takes her way—"

the effect, in translation, was not precisely the one intended. This is not to belittle Japanese poetry, which in the hands of the Japanese masters is exquisite; but like all poetry it is full of clichés once the creations of these same masters, and amateurs, like the prisoners in Sugamo, use them over and over ad nauseam. The best poets among these prisoners, according to Dr. Hanayama, were Captain Hirate and General Muto, who both possessed natural if untrained literary talent.

The subtle allusiveness of the *tanka* and the fondness felt by Japanese soldiers and statesmen for this manner of expressing their "last words" created a problem for our Nisei censors, many of whom solved it by cutting out *all* poems found in the letters of the condemned. By copying down these *tanka* from their authors' dictation, as for some reason our authorities permitted him to do, Hanayama short-circuited the censorship so to speak, and undoubtedly saved for the world if not for Japanese literature many of the poems contained in his book.

As a sample of what can be suggested in a *tanka*, take the Emperor's own contribution on the occasion of the Imperial Poetry Contest at New Year's, 1946. The subject was "Pine in the Snow."

The pine is brave  
That changes not its color,  
Bearing the snow.  
People, too,  
Like it should be.

Now, just what does this mean? The picture painted in the first three lines (quite enough to give the Japanese mind the lead) is a pretty one on the surface; but what does it *mean*? Obviously the pine is Japan, which is adjured to bear its difficulties bravely. But does "changes not its color" mean "maintains its integrity," an interpretation which the most exacting of the Occupation authorities could respect, or does it mean "is not affected at all"—by such an alien creed, say, as Democracy? A *tanka* seems to mean anything the imaginative reader can make it.

*Tannisho*—A Buddhist gospel.

*Tenno*—"Heavenly King." The Emperor.

*Toa*—East Asia. See *Koa Kai*

*Wasan*—Buddhist hymns.

*Zen*—See *Buddhism*.

NOTE.—The retranslating of foreign proper names from Japanese into the original is sometimes extremely difficult. Instinct, imagination, and sheer good luck are called for to get them right. This is because such names are translated into the Japanese phonetic syllabary known as *katakana*, which can only approximate non-Japanese sounds. Thus, "Bill," "beer," and the abbreviation of "building" are all *kana*-ized in the same way. And thus, in the text, "Walsh" and "Welch," while not sounding identical to a Japanese ear, may easily be confused by one not familiar with either. Consultation with Dr. Hanayama regarding this matter did no good. "Pal," as the retranslation of the Indian Justice's name, looked suspicious at first glance, but was found to be correct after a search in the back files of the New York Times. The name of the French friend of the Kimura family, on the other hand, is almost certainly incorrectly spelled. It is to be hoped, therefore, that Dr. Hanayama's chaplain acquaintances (and others) will be forgiving if they find that their names have been taken in vain!